# THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN TEACHER ENCOURAGED

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THE

YOUNG CHRISTIAN TEACHER

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# NIHIL OBSTAT.

St. Louis, November 5th, 1902.

F. G. HOLWECK,
CENSOR THEOLOGICUS.

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St. Louis, November 6th, 1902.

+ JOHN J. KAIN,
ARCHBISHOP OF ST. LOUIS.

# THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN TEACHER ENCOURAGED:

OR

# OBJECTIONS TO TEACHING ANSWERED.

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*Act like a man and take courage and do; fear not and be not discouraged; for the Lord, my God, will be with thee.—I. Paral., xxxiii, 20.*

What greater or better gift can we offer the republic, than to teach and instruct youth?—*Cicero.*

The blessings of a cultivated mind are akin to those of religion.—*Bishop Spalding.*

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN L. SPALDING, D. D.,

BISHOP OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS.

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BY

B. C. G.

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TO THE

YOUNG, HEROIC, RELIGIOUS TEACHERS

WHO HAVE RENOUNCED WORLDLY HONORS AND WEALTH,

SACRIFICED HOME AND FRIENDS

TO DEVOTE THEIR LIVES TO THE GREAT CAUSE

OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, TO PROMOTE

GOD'S HONOR AND GLORY

AND HIS REIGN IN THE VIRGINAL HEARTS OF YOUTH,

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THE EDITOR

B. C. G.

# A WORD TO THE READER.

A work, entitled "Motives of Encouragement for young Teachers: or Objections to teaching answered," was published in Paris, in 1866. It was from the gifted pen of Frère Exupérien, an eminent religious educator. It was productive of much good and passed through several editions.

In view of this fact, the present editor was encouraged to undertake the labor of presenting an American edition of this excellent little book. But it was found necessary to make alterations, especially in presenting the arguments refuting the objections. These are altogether new and greatly enlarged, retaining only from the original French such matter as could advantageously be employed to supplement the present arrangement. The illustrations following each objection were retained, save an introduction here and there to render the reading more fluent. The poetical quotations at the head of each objection and throughout the work as well as the citations from the ancient classic writers, have been added by the editor.

It is to be hoped that, with these emendations, the little volume will be deemed acceptable to young Teachers who need consolation and encouragement in their ministry, and who enter upon their professional career with a love and sympathy for the children committed to their charge.

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# PREFACE.

"There is a deep truth in the idea of Socrates that we can teach only those who love us. Is not this implied in the command of the Saviour that His disciples love Him and one another? If minds are to be fertilized, they must receive the seed of truth from sympathetic minds. We can improve only those whose confidence and good-will we have gained; and a radical defect in teachers is the lack of sweetness and mildness, of the gentle and persuasive force which goes forth from an open mind and kindly heart." (1)

Education is the most difficult of arts and as long as men, observes the learned Bishop Spalding, imagine that a little knowledge, a little skill, is all that is required to make a teacher, so long shall our schools fail to contribute in any real way to our progress.

Hence, the purport of this little volume is to guide and console the young Christian teacher who may be tempted to succumb to the difficulties which he must needs overcome in the performance of his arduous functions. Moreover, he may be prone to lose his zeal and devotedness, and, perhaps, may be exposed to the danger of abandoning his sublime calling, after having generously put his hand to the plow. Now, this unhappy frame of mind is brought about by a

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*(1) Bishop Spalding, Aphorisms and Reflections, p. 53.*

weakening of the spirit of faith and by the false light in which he looks upon the trials and hardships of his profession.

Consequently, when a *religious teacher* is discouraged and even entertains the thought of giving up his ministry, because, forsooth, children are full of defects, or because his profession is hard and difficult, or because his health is thereby endangered, or because his labors are not seemingly appreciated, he gives undeniable evidence of woeful ignorance of the fundamental principles governing, not only the religious, but even the ordinary Christian life.

Now, the principal causes of the loss of vocation can always be attributed, either to a neglect of prayer, or a lack of intimate knowledge of the Life of Christ.

For, it is in fervent, earnest prayer that a Christian teacher can attain to the full comprehension of the greatness of his ministry. It is from prayer that he draws the requisite strength for the fulfilment of his duties. These are not infrequently very painful and trying to frail human nature.

"All religious teachers who become disgusted with their holy state," affirms Father Judde, "or who seem ready to abandon it, have all, without exception, begun by neglecting prayer. Nay more, we dare even defy any one to point out the single exception of a religious who is faithful to his spiritual exercises, and who, at the same time, remains discontented in his holy state."

Therefore, any religious teacher who sincerely desires to persevere in his ministry and to comply with the salutary counsel of that experienced and skilful

teacher, St. J.-B. de la Salle, "Should hold the exercise of mental prayer in great esteem, for it is the foundation and support of all virtues, besides being the source of all the graces we need both for our own sanctification and for that of our neighbor." (1)

The second cause assigned for the loss of vocation is a *lack of intimate knowledge of the Life of Christ.* Indeed, experience has fully proved that many religious teachers who, at the beginning of their holy ministry, enter into the full spirit of their calling with a magnanimous, generous heart, gradually relax their zeal and grow weary of their labors. They seem to regret the noble sacrifices they have made. The high ideals and aspirations of faith vanish. Disinterested love is replaced by selfish interests, and the spirit of faith is diminished in proportion as the worldly spirit gains the ascendancy. This coldness and indifference to the duties and spirit of religion may be ascribed to the fact that the Life of Christ and its noble lessons are wholly forgotten. Instead of studying this incomparable Model, they substitute worldly teachers who have become the idol of the hour and the glory of admiring devotees. Thus, the attachment to Christ, the Teacher of teachers, grows less and less ardent and affectionate, and, in consequence, teachers neglect to practise His virtues, to emulate His example, and to follow His ennobling, sublime principles. Moreover, they rarely meditate on the mysteries of the Life of Christ, His greatness, and benefits, or on the infinite obligations they owe Him. Consequently, they do not strive to labor in unison with Him, nor with that

*(1) Thoughts of St. J.-B. de la Salle.*

sincere, generous love, nor with that perfect conformity of mind and heart which characterizes the true religious, the truly apostolic man.

Besides, the Christian teacher should ever bear in mind that "the end of education, and of religion, is the formation of a moral personality, by the union of faith and reason, with an awakened conscience and a steadfast will."

For "nature suffers compulsion only when we have learned her secret; and this applies, with special force, to human nature. We can compel the young to the self-activity without which there is no self-improvement, not only by threats and violence, but by bringing to bear on them the charm of influence which they can not fully understand, but to which they irresistibly yield: and only those who possess and use this secret are educators." (1)

Hence, in answering the principal objections which are offered against teaching, we have endeavored to adduce sound principles and solid doctrines. We have grouped together, therefore, a number of positive opinions and striking traits. Moreover, we have supported our refutations by appropriate passages from Scripture, from the masters of the spiritual life, and from profound thinkers. These citations are calculated to make a deep impression upon the docile mind of every true Christian educator.

We offer this little volume, therefore, to the young Christian teacher, hoping that it may aid him and present to his consideration many motives for consolation and encouragement.

(1) *Aphorisms and Reflections, p. 217.*

May God deign to bless our labors and give them power to enlighten and strengthen the zeal and faith of the young teachers into whose hands this book may chance to fall. May it sustain their courage in the midst of the varying difficulties and perplexing annoyances they shall have to encounter and endure in pursuance of their onerous ministry.

Should this volume prove the means of helping even one soul who may sorely be tried by discouragement, and should he find therein the means of sanctifying his sufferings or strengthening his vocation, then, indeed, shall we be amply rewarded for the sweet labor we have accomplished.

FEAST OF ST. JOHN-BAPTIST DE LA SALLE,
May 15, 1902.
Memphis, Tennessee.

# INTRODUCTION.

The volume which is herewith offered to the Catholic teachers of America can not fail to attract their serious attention. It is all alive with the spirit of religious faith, zeal and devotion. There breathes through its pages a serene confidence in the absolute worth of the work which our schools are doing. It is more than an encouragement—it is an inspiration. The author makes us understand and feel that the religious teacher's vocation is a divine calling—a permanent opportunity to co-operate with Christ for the enlightenment, the purification and the salvation of the world. His appeal is to the highest in man, to the soul which lives not on bread alone, but on every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. The book is full of cheer, courage and hope. It is not a pedagogical treatise, a collection of rules, formulas and precepts. It is the utterance of piety, fervor and love. It is replete with the spirit and the wisdom of the Divine Master, and of those who have known Him best and followed most closely in His footsteps. It is unlike any other book in English. It is something of which thousands of our Catholic teachers have felt the need. It will become for them a vade mecum, a manual to which they may turn again and again for light and strength. Religious education is our most distinctive work. It gives us a place apart in the life of the country. It is

indispensable to the welfare and progress of the church in the United States, and will be recognized in the end as the most vital contribution to American civilization. Fortunate are they, who by words or deeds confirm our faith in the need of Catholic schools; and yet more fortunate are they who, while they inspire our teachers with new courage and zeal, awaken in the young, to whom God has given a heart and a mind, an efficacious desire to devote themselves to the little ones whom Christ loves. What better work, in the present time, can any of us do than to foster vocations to our Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods whose special mission is teaching? This volume will not only bring consolation and joy to the hearts of Catholic teachers; it will also draw many pure and loving souls to their ranks. That it will find readers there can be no doubt, for whoever takes it in hand will become its advocate and eulogist.

J. L. SPALDING,
Bishop of Peoria.

Peoria, Sept. 16, 1902.

# FIRST OBJECTION.

## CHILDREN ARE FULL OF DEFECTS.

Man still has faults and men will have them still,
He that hath none, and lives as angels do,
Must be an angel.—*Wentworth Dillon.*

"The greatest evil of man," observed Plato, "is a defect that is born with him, which every one excuses in himself, and, consequently, of which no one ever labors to rid himself, namely, self-love." This defect is not the only one to which human nature is heir. *For the imagination and thoughts of man's heart are prone to evil from his youth.* (1) The evil germs, then, are within, and wait but time and age to develop. "It is with these evil germs," remarks Dupanloup, (2) "and sometimes the most vicious inclinations, aye, it is with the deep-seated defects of this nature, that the struggle must be carried on." The existence of these evil germs is a universal law of our tainted nature. St. Paul expresses this truth clearly and forcibly, thus: *I find then a law, that when I have a will to do good, evil is present with me. For I am delighted with the law of God, according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members.* (3)

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*(1) Gen., viii, 21. (2) The Child, chap. vi.*
*(3) Rom., vii, 21-23.*

St. John, the Evangelist, traces all our defects and vices to three sources, namely, pride, sensuality, and cupidity. In these three pregnant words, he sums up all the evils of the human heart.

It is obvious, therefore, that all flesh is tainted, and hence every child is born with the germs of passions, vices, and defects. The Christian teacher should realize this truth that innocent child-nature is no exception to this general law. Again, he should ever keep in mind that children are differently constituted, every one having his own temperament and disposition. These are a powerful factor in the development of passions and vices, and demand a careful study. The more the Christian teacher studies human nature, its tendencies and inclinations, the better qualified is he to do effective work. He will then know what remedies to apply in special cases to curb the passions and bring them under the control of right reason. The study of dispositions, temperament, and character is not speculative. The true educator seeks the means by which he may aid a child-nature to develop its good inclinations and to combat the bad.

To presume child-nature free from passions and their consequent effects, is to suppose it other than human. Passions are a part of our inheritance. Now, passions are nothing more than the movements of the sensitive appetites. In themselves, they are neither morally good nor morally evil. Indeed, etymologically considered, the term passion is opposed to action, and implies a state in which the subject is merely passive. But when the instincts, the inclinations, tend actively to be gratified, they are called voluntary passions.

These movements of the sensitive appetite, then, are caused by the idea of good or of evil. Hence, to direct properly or to control these movements of our irascible nature, constitutes one of the essential functions of the Christian educator. The child, indeed, feels these movements, but he is still ignorant of their power for good or evil. The teacher's experience, aided by acquired knowledge, should prove a powerful lever in his hands in directing the budding passions of child-nature.

His work in guiding the awakening passions of the child into the right channel will be lightened, if he take the attitude of the parent toward the child. "Children, however ugly, are beautiful in the eyes of their mothers," says St. Ambrose; "they prefer their appearance to that of handsome children, and they would not change them if they could, being blind to defects which are apparent to any observer." How wonderful the effect of love! Now, the Christian teacher who enters upon his arduous duties with a heart full of love and compassion, will soon bring about a complete change in the children entrusted to his care. For a strong, manly love attracts, conquers, educates, and transforms. Parents are not blind to the moral defects of their children, but love actuates and influences all their actions concerning the child. Hence, the Christian teacher, actuated by an enlightened zeal and a supernatural love, imitates the parents and wins the affection of the children. Love, however, does not blind the true educator to the taints in child-nature. For he is aware, as St. Augustine clearly points out, that the germs of a thousand vices are im-

planted in child-nature, and seek, under favorable conditions, to grow and flourish therein.

To offset these perverse inclinations of the child, the Christian educator should ever remember that the nature of a child is quite a little world in itself, an abyss which can never be sufficiently explored and enlightened. Now, "if the educator has not sounded this abyss, if he has not fathomed the heart in every possible way, he is unsuited to the great work of education. It is not on the surface, but in the interior of the soul, that this work is to be done." For "the heart of the child," said an eminent educator, "is the book which must be pondered on and searched into continually. It is a never-ending study. There will always be something to discover in it, and the teacher will be competent for his work only in proportion as he becomes clever in reading this living book and fathoming all its secrets." The tendency to evil slumbering in every heart may be roused at any moment.

But the defects of child-nature should not discourage the true educator. They ought, on the contrary, to inspire him with a tender, growing compassion for those who are still too young to comprehend either their misery or the necessity of struggling against their vices, defects, and evil inclinations. The sight of youthful depravity, however alarming, should tend to excite the Christian teacher's soul to greater zeal and animate his heart with a sincere desire to win these poor children, and thus save them from themselves. Youth is truly the proper time for the cor-

rection of faults and for the guidance of natural tendencies.

"Christian education," remarks Dupanloup, "is singularly powerful, and frequently works miracles. It is the glory, nay, the triumph, of education to struggle with an obstinate nature, to conquer, correct, transform, and refine it. But the chief point in this work is to begin in good time, otherwise it may be shorn of its efficacy or even become entirely unproductive. In childhood and youth the faults have not yet struck deep roots, nor acquired rapid growth. All is still tender and weak. Later on, habit will be formed, and habit soon becomes second nature, to resist which, is, indeed, well nigh impossible."

Moreover, experience teaches that passion corrupts the will. For every passion, according to Plato, is a nail to fasten the will to the body. Thus, the great duty of the Christian teacher, his noblest and most arduous function, should be centered in educating the child's will. For unless children are taught how to govern themselves and to overcome habit by habit, the passions will sway the mind, weaken the will, and plunge the soul into the greatest disorder. Even Aristotle taught that the rational soul ought to strive to yield as little as possible to the sensitive appetites of our inferior and animal nature. He considered this the greatest and noblest object of his labors. To vanquish self, observes Plato, is the greatest and most glorious of all victories. Many men, writes the moralist, Seneca, have commanded cities and peoples, but few have commanded themselves by becoming masters of their passions. Solomon tells us that the patient

man is greater than the strong man, and he who rules his soul, greater than he who takes cities. But to gain this glorious victory by regulating our passions, St. Gregory of Nyssa teaches that anger and hatred must be as a dog to defend us against our enemies; boldness, the dart by which to attack them; hope, the staff on which to lean, and reason the arbiter of all.

Undoubtedly, the education of youth would be one of the most delightful of duties, if children were all that they should be. How pleasant to find them ever docile, innocent, and studious! How consoling if they were always to profit by the care lavished upon them! How charming, if the Christian teacher were assured that they would continue to walk unswervingly in the path of virtue which he had so painstakingly pointed out to them! But, alas! how different the case when the educator has to deal with children who seemingly despise, reject, ignore, perhaps even contemn, the great sacrifices he makes in their behalf! Ah, then indeed, the charm of teaching ceases, and the teacher is naturally inclined to become discouraged and to lose interest in his ministry, aye, even to be tempted to abandon it.

But reflect well, Christian teacher, on these words of Thomas à Kempis: "All self-seekers and self-lovers are bound in fetters, full of desires, full of cares, unsettled, and seeking always their own ease, and not the things of Jesus Christ; but oftentimes devising and framing that which shall not stand.

"Take this short and perfect word: *Forsake all, and thou shalt find all; leave thy desires, and thou shalt find rest.*" (1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book iii., Chapter xxxii, 1.*

"If we strove like valiant men to stand in battle, doubtless we should see that our Lord would help us from heaven.

"For He is ready to help them that fight, and trust in His grace; who furnishes us with occasions of fighting that we may overcome." (1)

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## I.

### CHANCELLOR GERSON'S TENDER LOVE FOR CHILDREN.

All those who allow the faults of pupils to give them a disgust for the sublime vocation of educating youth, should listen to the reproach of Gerson and endeavor to understand their error:

"If an ox or an ass had fallen into a pit, would we not hasten to pull it out? And, can it be possible that we will refuse a helping hand to children whom we see on the brink of a precipice! A house takes fire and threatens to communicate the flames to a whole town. A brave man climbs on the roof despite excessive heat and personal danger. From the vantage ground, gained with such difficulty, he directs a stream of water on the burning timbers and succeeds in arresting the progress of the conflagration. His self-imposed task accomplished, the cheers of the spectators rend the air, and he is proclaimed a hero, the savior of the city. Yet what has he done to merit such honor? He has succeeded in preserving a few houses built of stone and wood from being devoured by

*(1) Ibid., Book I., Chapter xi. 4.*

flames. And children's souls, are they not of greater value than piles of stone and wood? Are they not the temples of the living God, the sanctuaries of the Holy Ghost, and the City of God? Shall we stand idly by and see them become a prey to the fire of their passions and the eternal flames of hell? The demons are exerting all their terrible powers to drag them down to the bottomless abyss, and shall we stand by and make no effort to save them? Shall we say to ourselves: The trouble is too great and they are not worth it!

"This was not our Lord's way of thinking! On the contrary, He teaches us that we should love children notwithstanding their defects and with an ardor comparable to their perverse inclinations to evil. Does He not tell us that we should care for the children as the hen cares for her chickens? Just look at her solicitude in watching over them! She is always on the move, calling them and keeping them in sight! Observe the tenderness with which she gathers them under her wings when the hawk appears in sight. Should she find a delicate morsel, she forgets self and calls her young ones to partake of it! Such is the model Jesus proposes for imitation. If our hearts remain cold toward children we shall run the risk of being eternally lost." No! it shall not be thus! For the future the defects of their years shall be to us a new motive for greater zeal.

But, after all, what is there astonishing in the fact that children have faults? If they were perfect, what would be the need of education? What is the purport of parents who confide their children to our care?

Is it not that we may refine their crude natures, and spare no trouble in rooting up their bad habits, and implant in their souls the good seed of virtue?

What should we think of a teacher who would get into a passion with children because they were not able to solve a problem, or demonstrate a theorem in Geometry, or invent a scheme or a skeleton for an essay, or follow a train of reasoning? Naturally, we would be inclined to smile at him, because he expects of children what would take years of patient labor to accomplish. The intellectual faculties should be developed gradually, and the teacher ought to be satisfied if he can awaken interest in the study he has to teach. This is assuredly no easy task, as experience testifies. Mental development is slow, and proceeds by gradual stages. It is accomplished only after long years of patient, methodical, and persistent labor. Could we act otherwise when the education and development of the child's will and character are involved? Besides, if we had a class of saints to look after we would surely not expect a recompense for patience or devotedness! We should then be mere spectators only of an heroic combat, without any participation therein. Could we consistently claim any of the prizes given to the victors?

"Patience," remarks Bishop Spalding, [1] "is capacity to bear, to bear work and to bear pain: and it is only by faithful exercise of this capacity that character and mind can be formed and cultivated."

*(1) Bishop Spalding, Aphorisms and Reflections, p. 130.*

## II.

### THE TEACHER SHOULD NOT BE DISHEARTENED, BECAUSE HIS PUPILS HAVE DEFECTS, NEITHER SHOULD HE DISPLAY HASTE IN THEIR CORRECTION.

The following principle is of primary importance to a teacher of youth: To endure with calmness the evil he can not prevent, and to suffer tranquilly and without disquietude, the privation of the good which he so ardently desires, either for the class in general or for certain pupils in particular. Learn how to be resigned and know how to wait. Now, God certainly could, if He so wished, oblige His creatures to do whatever He required of them, and yet, observe with what patience and long-suffering He awaits their return to Him. He never forces, never constrains them. And we poor mortals who possess neither the power of God nor the knowledge of His impenetrable secrets, dare betray our impatience when we are not instantly obeyed! What presumption to feign the good more ardently than He does! Let us not be rash, but rather let us abide His time, being assured that His own good pleasure will effect what we desire, or procure for us even something better. Moreover, may it not be true that He, under certain given circumstances, does not want our success, but merely wishes to test our good will and our resignation.

"When you have personally, conscientiously fulfilled your duties to the best of your knowledge and ability," writes a man of eminent virtue, "do not allow your heart to be disturbed or disheartened, but

leave your success to an All-wise Providence who disposes all things in accordance with His good pleasure."

Furthermore, "be not too eager concerning the faults and defects which now exist or may hereafter exist, nor about the means of their prevention," as St. John Baptist de la Salle adroitly admonishes, "and seek not to prevent a wrong by another wrong, that is, by being too hasty to do good. Observe God's ways in dealing with men. He manifests His Divine Will and does whatever His wisdom and love can suggest without constraining us, and then allows us perfect liberty of action to do the good or avoid the evil. Notice, again, how He acted toward His apostles. He first instructs and exhorts them, and then He permits them freedom and liberty of action, without being the least disturbed as to the results. Moreover, let us carefully bear in mind that a too great eagerness to do good very often neutralizes and destroys it; for, some minds are so constituted that a too great opposition only confirms them in wrong-doing. The example of a skilful gardener will serve to illustrate this thought. When he desires a branch to take a direction opposite to its natural growth, he is exceedingly cautious not to force it too much at a time. He is content with a little gain every day or every week. He is fully aware that to accomplish his object, it will take a year or even years, ere the branch yields to his training. He is by no means discouraged. On the contrary, he is perfectly content with the slow, gradual process, because he fully realizes that if he does not exercise the greatest care and good judgment, he is apt to

break the branch and thus defeat his own object and render its accomplishment impossible. Hence, when we, too, meet with a difficult case, we should allow our heart to expand and give full sway to our charity, and leave to God the return of such souls to virtuous ways, for they are beyond our power and control. Consequently, it is the part of wisdom, under such circumstances, to deal rather with God than man, for the Creator holds the hearts of all men in His hands and can turn them as He wills. It is to be feared, however, that you dread defects too much, and that you have not completely mastered that serenity of mind and heart, and equanimity of temper which should always characterize the religious teacher."

## SECOND OBJECTION.

### CHILDREN HAVE NOT ONLY DEFECTS BUT BUDDING VICES; HENCE IT IS USELESS TO WASTE TIME IN CORRECTING THEM.

> Alas! our frailty is the cause, not we;
> For, such as we are made of, such we be.—*Shakespeare.*

Another objection which ordinarily obtains, is deduced not from defects only, but from the budding vices detected in pupils.

Generally, when a young teacher assumes the charge of a class for the first time, his quick eye and ready wit detect many irregularities which he had supposed foreign to innocent child-nature. He will, no doubt, find some children who, through a lack of early training, or through a want of proper vigilance on the part of parents, or through force of circumstances and environments, have been already initiated into evil ways and steeped in vice, despite their tender years. The discovery of this state of youthful degeneration is apt to create a baneful impression upon the mind of the young, inexperienced teacher. Naturally, he flattered himself at the bright, hopeful prospect of having to deal only with innocent children, free from all guile or malice. The beautiful ideal was conjured up by his vivid imagination and clothed to suit his fancy. He never suspected the possibility of ever having it disfigured. How different now the vision when confronted with stern reality! He discovers that all are not lambs. He has to deal with the zebra of the

desert whose form and movements, according to the language of Scripture, are beautiful and graceful, exciting our admiration, but whose impetuous nature will brook no restraint. Hence we need not wonder that the young teacher should be tempted to despair of success. It is natural that he should ask himself: Of what avail are my labors? What is the good in endeavoring to accomplish an impossible task?

"It is true," as Gerson acknowledges, "that a great many children have offended God. Seduced by the temptations of Satan, or led astray by bad companions, they have unfortunately lost their innocence and have suffered shipwreck in their virtue. They have perhaps contracted pernicious habits of sin. Do not, however, despair. No matter how corrupted they may be, it is certainly easier to correct them now than to wait until their passions have developed full strength, or have taken deep root in their youthful hearts."

But this is not all. Let us assume the hypothesis that the conscientious labors of the young Christian teacher have been seemingly fruitless, and that the greater number of children remain hardened, obdurate, despite all his efforts. We do not hesitate to affirm that his labors have not been entirely ineffectual. "Should I succeed in saving the soul of one child only, in a month or in a year," says Gerson elsewhere, "surely you would not consider that a loss of time." St. Ignatius esteemed his labors amply rewarded if he succeeded in preventing the commission of a single mortal sin.

Now, it is obvious from the import of the objection, that the young teacher has not studied child-nature. He presumes a nature still untainted, whereas he should remember that original sin has profoundly altered it, particularly in its moral faculties. It is weak and prone to evil in many ways. The nature of the child must needs be carefully developed, prepared, and equipped for battle, and thus be enabled to free itself from inordinate passions.

The educator should, moreover, bear well in mind that the child's faculties are not only powers capable of acting, but are really active. The intellect is eager for the truth, and seeks it with a restless curiosity. The sensitive appetites are prompt to emotions, while the will freely determines its acts, whence are born habits. But this activity, although still feeble, has need of guidance as well as support. This education assures to it. Thus education, rightly understood, will give to child-nature its strength, and, with God's help, will teach it to control its passions and inclinations.

Besides, the educator who seriously studies the child-nature, will discover two distinct elements: the one, fundamental, common to all, and the other variable, comprising the peculiarities which distinguish one child from another. Now, the fundamental element is the human composite, comprising its two substances, the spiritual and the material. It is the comprehension of the phenomena of the sensitive life and those of the intellectual, moral, and supernatural life. It is this which characterizes child-nature, wherein it is yet weak and imperfect. The variable element which, on the other hand, consists in the many differ-

ences, determines among children the temperament, the physical constitution, the moral character, and the dispositions of the mind, will, and heart. (1)

This thorough knowledge of child-nature is requisite for the Christian teacher, for the educative action should tend to give both a general impetus to the pupils and an individual direction to the ideas, sentiments, and habits of every child composing the class. If the general principles of direction are the same for all children, in so far as their nature is the same in its essential constitution, how varied, then, is the manner of applying them to each child! Here is precisely where the educator's error lies, when he is ignorant of the way of knowing how to take each child and direct him properly. St. J.-B. de la Salle fully understood the importance of this comprehensive study of child-nature. He said: "Discern the manner in which to act toward pupils. Experience teaches that men, and especially children, can not be directed in the same way: some require great mildness, while others need to be directed with firmness. There are those who demand great patience, while others need to be stimulated: some require to be rebuked sharply to correct them of their faults, and others need constantly to be watched, lest they go astray or lose themselves. This varied conduct must depend upon our knowledge and discernment." (2)

Always remember that God does not require success, and that the greater the combat the more glorious shall be our crown. We seem to forget that our cal-

(1) *Cf. Éléments de Pédagogie Pratique c. II., p. 53.*

(2) *Meditations for Sundays and Festivals,* II. Sunday after Easter, p. 142.

culations and conclusions are very often false. Not infrequently, good is effected at the very moment when it seems that all is lost, and that our time has been hopelessly wasted.

Now, "I am fully aware," observes Gerson, "that certain children remain hardened notwithstanding all our efforts, while others, after having been good for a time, grow weary of well-doing and deviate from the path of righteousness. Nevertheless, I do not on that account consider my work lost. I cherish the fond hope that the good seed I have sown, may yet produce its fruit when the opportune moment arrives. How often do we not see men of mature minds and years recall, in the agonizing throes of adversity, the lessons they have received in boyhood days! How bitterly do they not bewail the little benefit derived therefrom! But they return to God fully converted after having been touched by His tender mercies and chastened by the rude hand of affliction. I shall therefore continue to plant and water the good seed, sincerely trusting that God will give the increase when, where, and how it shall please Him."

Happily the number of those who do not profit by the blessings of a Christian education is small. "Yes," observed Pope Pius V., "constant experience teaches us that children who have been educated in a Christian manner, lead generally a chaste and exemplary life, and attain even to eminent sanctity: whereas those who have not enjoyed this blessing, are almost invariably lost, or what is still more deplorable, they contribute to the loss of others by their

bad example. They plunge headlong into revolting vices and commit sins from which Christian education would have preserved them."

The opinion of this saintly Pope is certainly very consoling. It should excite our zeal, for it promises almost certain ultimate success as the reward of our continued and sustained efforts.

To attain the worthy end of our ministry, the Christian teacher should leave nothing undone to make himself complete master of the situation, religiously and intellectually. Intellectually, he must needs possess a practical knowledge of child-nature. Hence, he should make a serious study of General Psychology, and particularly that which applies to the nature of children. He should likewise often recall the manner in which he himself was educated and the means that were employed to direct and aid him in controlling passions. Then he should carefully study the children under his care, note their habits, temperament, disposition, and aptitudes. If he does this conscientiously, he will be well equipped to govern children and to direct each one according to his individual character. His work will then prove interesting and far from being a waste of time. For

He who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more than a king.—*Milton.*

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## I.

### A BAD BEGINNING BUT A HAPPY ENDING.

"In 1775," writes Mgr. de Ségur, "the city of Osimo, near Loretto, Italy, had organized a splendid procession to celebrate the opening of the Jubilee, in which all the students of the College and Seminary were participants. It was customary at such solemn celebrations that the Cross-bearer be accompanied by two acolytes, each bearing a richly-wrought massive silver candle-stick. On this occasion, the two acolytes selected for the honor, were sons of noble and illustrious families, both of the same age, and by name, Della Genga and Castiglione. While the procession was in progress, the two young noblemen began to quarrel for some reason or other, and an exciting duel in words resulted. From disrespectful words, they came to blows. Having no other weapons than their artistically carved candlesticks, they, in the heat of passion, began to strike each other with them, and before any person could interfere, Della Genga had received a blow which stretched him senseless on the ground.

"In 1825, fifty years after this incident, the next Jubilee was proclaimed. Here again we find our two acolytes. One, Della Genga, is now the supreme Pontiff, under the memorable name of Leo XII. Surrounded by the whole Roman Court, the Holy Father proceeds from the Vatican Palace to St. Peter's to preside at the ceremony of 'the opening of the Holy Door.' This consists in opening a certain door of St. Peter's which remains walled up, except during the

Jubilee Year. When the Supreme Pontiff arrives at the Holy Door, the Cardinal Grand Penitentiary presents him with a silver hammer with which the Holy Father knocks at the door, the signal for the removal of the brick wall. When the artisans have completed their task, the Holy Father enters, and the door is then declared open for the year.

"The Cardinal Grand Penitentiary on this occasion is no other than the companion acolyte in the procession of Osimo, in 1775. It was certainly a remarkable coincidence. After receiving the hammer from the hands of the now Cardinal Castiglione, the Pope, with a merry twinkle in his eye and a significant smile, asked him in a whisper: 'Does your Eminence remember what took place at the last Jubilee? You then also gave me a beautiful instrument, but not with the gentleness and grace with which you handed me the silver hammer.'

" 'Full well do I remember that memorable occasion, Holy Father,' replied the blushing and confused Cardinal, 'and hope that your Holiness has long since forgiven me, though it is evident you have not forgotten the unfortunate incident.'

"Four years elapsed, and the great Leo XII., who had been universally loved and honored, ended his too brief, but glorious reign. When the sacred College met in Conclave to elect his successor, Cardinal Castiglione was proclaimed Pope, under the name of Pius VIII."

Great, indeed, would have been the astonishment of those who witnessed the quarrel in 1775, could they have foreseen the splendid future and true great-

ness of the two angry acolytes. Consequently, never despair, no matter how deplorable the degeneracy, nor how wicked, the pupils may appear. Always remember that the pupil who makes a bad beginning, may end very nobly.

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"There was an occasion," writes Mgr. Dupanloup to a friend, "when I had to oppose strenuously the dismissal of two students from the College. I had the entire faculty against me. But feeling the justice of my cause, I pleaded with the professors and convinced them that the two students had good parts, and that dismissal at this critical stage of their lives, meant moral ruin. The faculty reconsidered the cases, and the students remained. Now, one of these students was of a turbulent disposition, and very reckless; yet withal, I noticed that he worked well and seemed full of faith; in fact he was good at heart. . . . . He died quite recently, Provincial of a Religious Order, leaving after him a name held in high esteem, and bearing a reputation for profound learning and moral worth.

"The other student was inclined to laziness and indifference. However, I was frequently surprised to find in his work the germs of latent talent which gave promise of future greatness, if duly developed. Consequently, I espoused his cause warmly and defended his interests whenever the occasion demanded. I have still a very distinct recollection of one of the meetings of the faculty, in which I had to defend my hero. I told the members of that board: 'Gentle-

men, beware of what you are about to do. *Festina lente,* and do not merit the reproach which Alexander addressed to the grooms of his stables. 'Stupid fellows! You do not know the value of the horse which you killed, because of your ignorance of knowing how to handle him.'

"Well, my dear friend, the student in question is to-day one of the most distinguished men in our Country."

Young teachers must needs put on the armor of invincible courage. They should never lose sight of the fact that their guilty negligence may seriously compromise God's glory and possibly endanger the salvation of the children of a whole school. Let them not claim that the hardships of their profession are beyond endurance. What profession is without its perils and difficulties? The hero always rises proportionately to the danger and counts personal sufferings as naught where the general good is at stake. Let no one presume to say that time is uselessly spent when there is question of teaching souls to love their Creator. Let the teacher remember the infinite prize paid for the ransom of souls, and this thought alone will make him a hero, and induce him to undergo all kinds of privations, aye, even at the sacrifice of life itself.

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## II.

### ADVANTAGES ACCRUING TO THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER FROM THE SUFFERING AND WEARINESS CAUSED THROUGH INTRACTABLE PUPILS.

We must needs suffer with patience and equanimity the hardships and difficulties which the duties of our profession entail. It is equally necessary to persevere in well-doing toward the pupils who may wound, grieve, or annoy us, without cessation of labor, or without afflicting our spirit, or without embittering our disposition, or disturbing the even tenor of our way. We should always bear in mind that to our long-suffering and patience are primarily attached our own merit as well as the reformation of our undisciplined, uncultured pupils. Above all, we should ever remember that to our disinterested zeal and single eye will they owe, in a great measure, their salvation. Moreover, the brightest and most precious gems in our heavenly crown will largely depend upon our zeal and patience.

"In our rambles through Public Parks and Squares," writes the Rev. Fr. Binet, "our attention is sometimes arrested by a magnificent fountain which throws out jets of water from the dragon's mouth. It has, undoubtedly, never entered our minds while standing admiringly before such a beautiful creation, to accuse the artist of an attempt upon our lives. Why, the insinuation is absurd! We praise his genius, and fearlessly quench our thirst with the cooling draught of the refreshing waters. Excellent! Sup-

pose now that we transfer the scene to the classroom. When a child, forsooth, looks at you sullenly, scowlingly, or perhaps calumniates and slanders you, let him be to you as the dragon's mouth. Treat him as you did the fountain. From between his sharp teeth draw the beneficent, healing waters, that is, make the occasion an opportunity for practising the most charming virtues."

"Do you wish, furthermore, to know," asks Father Lohner, "what enters into the plan of an All-wise Providence for you concerning these pupils, and all your persecutors? They hold precisely the same relative position toward you which is held by the brilliant intellectual gladiator when he is publicly defending and maintaining his thesis against a stubborn, subtle, and ingenious adversary. By their very contradictions they bring into brighter relief your many virtues, your patience, your humility, your charity. They are your best, truest friends, and not your enemies. Consequently, you should sincerely testify toward them your deepest gratitude."

Who can predict or calculate the numberless graces and blessings which the patience and long-suffering of the Christian teacher draw down upon the class. "Superiors without a cross," says the celebrated Fénelon, "are sterile when it is question of the formation of children to grace. One cross manfully and generously borne lends greater authority and imparts greater blessings than any other action they can perform or accomplish."

"You inform me that your community," writes the gentle St. Jane Frances de Chantal, "is apparent-

ly making no progress in perfection, that you esteem your labors as wholly fruitless and in vain, and that, in your judgment, another superior would accomplish better results and certain success. But you seem to exclude altogether from your mind the fact that the good is very frequently none the less real, although it may not be manifested by any external signs. Nevertheless, seeds you have sown to-day, will, in due season, fructify when aided by the labors of your successor, and yield a rich harvest. Be consoled, therefore, that not a single word of yours falls unheeded, and that not a prayer or an aspiration wafted on High, is useless or in vain. Moreover, every good example given, will, sooner or later, bear its fruit a hundredfold." "Now, relative to the girls," she wrote to another, "do your duty tranquilly by them, without being in the least disconcerted or disquieted. Needless to insist that God who is unquestionably much more concerned in the correction of their defects than you could ever possibly presume to be, nevertheless, tolerates them. Hence, endure with patience, since you are in no wise held responsible for their faults. They will, in due time, become more tractable, and will, perhaps, derive greater profit from your instruction and example, after they have been passed over to other hands. Our dear Lord will assuredly not permit that your patient and charitable labors in their behalf, shall be lost. He may, however, will, that another, and not you, shall enjoy the consolation and reap the fruit of your work." St. Paul boasted and gloried in having accomplished in the flesh that which was wanting to the sufferings

of Christ, namely, in obtaining for sinners by his own manifold sufferings, the application of the merits of Jesus Christ. It is in this sense also that St. Francis de Sales spoke when referring to the protomartyr, St. Stephen: "If he had not prayed for Saul, we would never have had Paul."

Behold the numberless, meritorious acts performed by Christian teachers. They toil and labor, in season and out of season, either for their own perfection or for the moral improvement of wrong-doers. Who will, therefore, have the rashness and presumption to say that such acts as, prayer, mortification, charitable admonitions, good examples, patience, humility, and others, are of little or no consequence? It was precisely the thought of such acts which forced St. Augustine to exclaim: "The good would soon cease to be good, if they had not the wicked to exercise their virtues."

Therefore,

> "Cease to lament for that thou canst not help,
> And study help from that which thou lament'st,
> Time is the nurse and breeder of all good."—*Shakespeare.*

Courage then, faithful teachers. Fear not to sow in tears, what you may reap in joy. Sow with all the magnanimity of your resources, that you may gather a hundredfold at harvest time. The husbandman never complains that seed-time lasts too long, for he is aware that the more generously he sows the more abundantly will he reap. In summer time, when he sees that each bushel of grain yields its thirtyfold or fortyfold, he is sad because he did not plant more. The present, therefore, is the seed time for

you, O Christian teachers! Do you wish the seed of eternal glory to yield a hundredfold, then sow now while you have yet time. Husband the moments that exercise your patience in contradictions, and garner scrupulously the precious time allotted for the constant fidelity to all the duties of your sublime calling.

With the pious Thomas à Kempis say: "Lord Jesus, as Thou hast said and hast promised, so may it be indeed; and may it be my lot to merit it.

"I have received the cross, I have received it from Thy hand, and I will bear it until death, as Thou hast laid it upon me. Indeed the life of a good religious man is a cross, but it is a cross that conducts him to paradise.

"We have now begun, it is not lawful to go back, nor may we leave off.

"Take courage, my brethren, let us go forward together, Jesus will be with us.

"For the sake of Jesus we took up His cross, for the sake of Jesus let us persevere in it.

"He will be our helper, who is our Captain and our Leader.

"Behold, our King marches before us, who will fight for us.

"Let us follow Him like men of courage; let no one shrink through fear; let us be ready valiantly to die in battle and not suffer our glory to be tarnished by flying from the standard of the Cross." (1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III., chapt. lvi, 5, 6.*

## THIRD OBJECTION.

### THE TROUBLE IN CLASS IS BEYOND ENDURANCE.

"O, how full of briers is the working-day world!"—*Shakespeare.*

What estimate would be formed of a merchant who would complain of the incessant fatigue and mental labor attendant upon the accumulation of wealth? From a worldly point of view, he would undoubtedly be considered a fool. How, then, will the Christian teacher be looked upon by truly apostolic men, when they hear him murmuring and complaining, because of the labor consequent upon his sacred functions?

If the young teacher experiences such difficulties and mental anxiety in instructing a few children, how immeasurably above his most cruel vexations must be the sufferings and trials of those heroic missionaries who voluntarily go into exile! They brave the most terrifying tempests, endure untold hardships and privations, incur imminent risk of being shipwrecked and dashed to pieces against lurking rocks, or of being stranded upon some hostile shore to become the capricious sport of cruel savages. How many of them have suffered a most horrible death, or else lingered for years in the most loathsome dungeons, a prey to cold and fiendish persecutors! Let us picture to our imagination the torturing rack, the caldron of seething oil, the glowing gridiron, the flaying alive, and a thousand other refined torments in-

vented by the malice of incarnate demons! Youths and maidens, men and women, nobles and slaves, representatives from every station of life, joyfully and heroically gave themselves up as willing victims to earn a martyr's crown.

What was the secret motive-power that induced, impelled the Martyrs and Missionaries to endure such heart-rending trials, sufferings, and persecutions? It was their love of God. Now, the greater the measure of this love, the greater was their patience under torment, the greater their joy to be accounted worthy to suffer for Christ. And we, Christian teachers, what is our standard, our measure of love, our hidden motive-power? God has placed us in a position that calls for generosity of love and nobility of heart, and shall we refuse Him the heroic sacrifice consequent upon our religious profession, and complain and murmur, because our path is narrow and filled with briers and thorns?

Look, again, on the pale and emaciated countenance of the young apprentice! It takes long, weary years of hard, persistent, and irksome toil to attain to a complete mastery of his art or trade. What patient drudgery is demanded of him! See the toilsome husbandman as he strives to cultivate that sterile tract of land! He is rewarded with a rich harvest only by the painful sweat of his brow and after having endured the burden and heats of the day. Behold the religious of the various orders, spending and being spent, in arduous, painful labor! Cheerfully do they sacrifice their lives, employ their talents, skill, and ability, never wearying of the constant, annoy-

ing, monotonous repetition to teach the simplest elements of an art or a science. Success has, at last, crowned their patient efforts, although they are fully conscious that their painful sacrifices are frequently opposed by the blackest ingratitude. Still undaunted, they plod their weary way. Observe the superiors who are harassed and careworn by anxiety and dread, lest their services prove unavailing, or, perhaps, altogether futile! Despite the serene brow and gentle smile, the path of superiors is one of thorns rather than roses, and difficulties and vexations seem to multiply as the day progresses. Withal, they do not shrink from the cross, but courageously cling to it and patiently bear it, as if it were the distinctive badge of their office. Nay, turn where you will, and everywhere you will observe the spirit of resignation, so characteristic of the man of true worth and strong character. Man is born to labor. It is the universal law; and labor is always more or less painful. Will you, therefore, claim an exemption? Will you consequently succumb and refuse to bear patiently the annoyances and difficulties attendant upon your position?

Let us place before our mind the example of Jesus Christ. He was in *labors from His youth,* as the Psalmist (1) has declared. His whole life was one continuous martyrdom. And we, Christian teachers, shall we dare murmur? Shall we seek a life free from trouble and vexation?

The great Apostle of the Gentiles who gloried in trials and tribulations, bears witness that *every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain* (2). And we,

(1) Ps. lxxxvii, 16. (2) Rom., viii, 22.

nevertheless, presume to pass through this vale of tears without trials, difficulties, and crosses. By what right do we claim this prerogative, this privilege?

Have we no faults, no sins, to expiate? If the just man falls seven times a day, what presumption have we, impotent creatures, to expect to pass through life without spot or blemish? Let us attentively consider what would be the measure of our suffering if God in His infinite Justice, had cut the thread of our life and cast us into the abyss of hell, there to burn in the fire of wrath, to endure the torture of demons, to be forever crushed under the awful, terrible curse of an offended, avenging God? Hence to escape this eternal chastisement, we must necessarily do penance. Now, there is no penitence more acceptable to God, nor more meritorious to our salvation, than suffering and bearing for His love the trials, crosses, and afflictions, which we will unavoidably encounter in the constant and daily performance of our duties toward our pupils. We should always remember this apothegm: *Opportunity makes the man.* We must shoulder our difficulties and bear them manfully, being fully assured that we will thereby avoid the terrible sufferings of eternity which await the faint-hearted in God's service.

It is but rational to follow in the paths dictated by Supreme Wisdom. We should cease therefore, our murmurs and complaints, and so act that we can say with the great Apostle: *I also in all things please all men, not seeking that which is profitable to myself, but to many, that they may be saved* (1). If we fol-

(1) I. Cor., x, 33.

low the noble lessons herein inculcated, we may, then, also be justified in exclaiming like Him: *I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulations* [1].

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## I.

### THE ASPECT FROM WHICH THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE RELIGIOUS TEACHER SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

Instead of taking nature for our point of view, suppose that we substitute a higher standard, namely, the spirit of faith. We will, then, undoubtedly, obtain, proportionately, greater strength to support the immense weight of our perplexing difficulties as well as a higher degree of fortitude, to bear with subsequent failures and discouragement. Then, too, will our resignation under adverse circumstances assert its beneficent influence, and powerfully help us when confronted with serious obstacles which we will necessarily have to withstand in the faithful and conscientious performance of our duties. Moreover, our minds, being less perturbed and more masters of themselves, we will accomplish more real good, with better and more lasting effect, and, at the same time, acquire greater merit for heaven.

"Happy disciples of Jesus Christ!" exclaims the pious Father Lyonnard [2], "your sufferings, united to those of your Master, become endowed with an efficaciousness altogether divine. Through them you

*(1) II. Cor., vii, 4 (2) Apostolat de la souffrance.*

receive the power to free yourself, more and more, from the sad consequences of sin, thus preventing the demon from re-gaining his empire over you. Besides providing you with an efficacious expedient for satisfying God's Justice for your many sins, your sufferings, if patiently endured, will put you in possession of a most happy resource wherewith to cancel a debt which you may, perhaps, owe Him, namely, some temporal punishment still due for sins already pardoned. It is through sufferings that you also will obtain the remission of innumerable faults committed through human frailty or negligence, and assuredly this is, in itself, no small advantage. For every truly spiritual man is painfully cognizant of the serious obstacles which these deliberate venial sins, together with their habit, place in the path of a soul eager for the attainment of solid virtues and a higher perfection. Hence, only after having been thus cleansed from the stains of sin, does it follow that our sufferings *fill up,* as St. Paul teaches, *those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ* (1). By this strong language, the great Apostle was anxious to make us clearly understand that, if the sufferings of Jesus Christ be not applied to us in their entirety, it is our imperative duty that we perfect and supplement them with our own. Now, since our Divine Master was obliged to suffer, it follows that His members must suffer with Him, if they desire to participate in the salutary benefits of His Passion and Death. For otherwise, the adorable and divine whole, which, in the inspired language of the Church is called the

(1) *Col., i, 24.*

mystical Body of Jesus Christ, would be wanting in that harmony which should exist between the Head and its Members. Indeed, what harmony can exist between the thorn-crowned Head and members who are complete strangers to suffering?

"By His Passion and Death, Jesus has reconciled us with God, our Father. Consequently, by uniting our sufferings to His, we obtain, as it were, a new confirmation of this blessed reconciliation. We receive thereby also an increase of sanctifying grace which is the precious pledge of our redemption, or rather, it is our own reconciliation effected in us through Jesus Christ. Moreover, we enter into a more intimate friendship with God the Father, because, owing to our sufferings, our resemblance to His own beloved Son has become more perfect. For there is nothing which the Father loves more to behold in the members of His Son than the faithful imitation of His suffering and crucified life. Similarly, nothing can be more delightful to the Sacred Heart of Jesus than to present to His eternal Father the continuation of His own sufferings, exemplified in the members united to Him. Ah! if necessity of satisfying Divine Justice explains the sufferings which we all have to endure in this vale of tears, the immense love of Jesus Christ for His Father will also give us the truest and most perfect explanation! Now, that Jesus is in His glory, He is incapable of suffering, for Christ resurrected suffers and dies no more. Nevertheless, through the love He bears His Father and us, He still yearns to suffer in the person of His members in whom He lovingly longs to repro-

duce so many examples of His own suffering and crucified person, thus perpetuating until the end of time His amorous and doleful passion. He wants us, furthermore, to comprehend the eminent advantages there are in store for us by suffering in union with our Chief, by whose power, they become, in a manner, divine. Therefore it is, that He gives us so large a share of His chalice to drink and so large a share of His Cross. Hence, the larger the portion the Christian drinks of this bitter draught, the more does he feel, developing and fermenting within himself, the sap of the tree of life, which is none other than the sanctifying and vivifying Blood of Jesus crucified.

"O Christian soul! member of Jesus Christ, you also suffer and wail, and, perhaps, you even dare murmur! Ah! rather rejoice and bless the Lord, whose paternal hand strikes you! This trial which seems to you so hard and cruel, is but a visitation from your God, which Job, that perfect type of patience and suffering, so beautifully expresses: *Thou visitest him early in the morning and Thou provest him suddenly* (1). This trial is but a new and higher degree of union of your whole being with that of your Divine Head, Jesus Christ, and, consequently, a more abundant participation in His Divine Life. It is, again, another guarantee of God's friendship and reconciliation with you.

"Receive, then, from His loving hand with equal gratitude, consolation and affliction, and bear constantly in mind that this illness, this infirmity, this drawback, this tribulation, is only a precious portion

(1) *Job, vii, 8.*

of the Cross of Jesus. It is a drop of His healing Blood, falling upon you from His gaping wounds, and conferring upon you grace and salvation. If you had had the unspeakable privilege of standing at the foot of the Cross with Mary, the Queen of Martyrs, at the moment this well-beloved Saviour died, and had one drop of His Divine Blood fallen upon your garments, how reverently and lovingly would you not have treasured it! But, now, that our Lord sends you an affliction, do you not receive thereby, as it were, this special favor, since your sufferings, if intentionally united to His, are, by that actual intention, united to His Divine Blood? I will add, could we actually take into our hand the sufferings of Christians and then press them, we would make, so to speak, issue therefrom drops of the Blood of Jesus. Indeed, Jesus Christ, as Head of the mystical body, united the sufferings of all His members so intimately with His own, that He with them forms, as it were, but one and the same body.

"Oh! how altogether different a complexion the character suffering assumes, when contemplated in the light of faith! In proportion as suffering appeared sad, humbling, crushing, when we had shut out this light of faith from our soul and trampled upon supernatural motives, so now, in the same proportion, also does it confer a something, sweet and elevating, which rejoices man while afflicting him, and ennobles him while humiliating him. It is the charming rose with its inseparable thorn, a luscious fruit of exquisite sweetness under a rough and bitter skin, the purest gold hidden by coarse earth. Is

it, then, to be wondered at that sufferings borne with patience and resignation, render us agreeable to God and open to us the portals of heaven? What a consoling thought!"

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## II.

### SUFFERING AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION TO DO GOOD.

"Our Lord," says Father Lallemant [1], "accomplished the redemption of the world only by His Cross and Death and the shedding of His Blood and not by His miracles and sermons. It follows then as a natural consequence that all apostolic men, if they desire to apply the saving grace of His redemption, can effect it only by the cross and persecutions which they have to endure. Hence, we must neither hope nor expect any fruit from our labors, unless they be accompanied by opposition and seasoned with sufferings.

"Crosses are essential in effecting man's salvation. It is by the royal road of the Cross that God conducts those whom He selects to labor for the salvation of souls. This was the thorny road of the Apostles and of Apostolic men, like St. Francis Xavier, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Vincent Ferrer, and St. Dominic.

"Hence, we should not look upon our tribulations, either as so many evils, or as so many humiliations, which tend to degrade us before men. We should on the contrary, view them, in imitation of

*(1) P. Lallemant, S. J., Doctrine Spirituelle.*

our incomparable Model, either as forming a part of the eternal designs of God, or, as being in accordance with the order of His Fatherly Providence, thus manifesting His Infinite Love towards us. Moreover, we ought to look upon our sufferings as having been specially selected for us by the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He lovingly presents them to us as so many bright gems to be set in the crowns which He is preparing for us. Lastly, we should consider them as serving to test our virtues and our fidelity in His service."

"Afflictions are," St. Vincent de Paul assures us, "the surest pledge of God's love towards us."

Now, the most efficacious way of effecting our own and our neighbor's salvation is, according to Father Lyonnard's teaching, to *suffer and to pray* in the true spirit of humility, confidence, love, and in unison with Jesus Christ. These are two essential, inseparable conditions pertaining to supernatural life. For, to attempt their separation, especially in the exercise of our apostolic zeal, is very seriously to compromise the result. Hence Christian teachers who desire sincerely to concur in the saving of souls, must needs *suffer and pray.*

We must exercise, then, the Apostolate of Suffering concurrently with that of teaching. We should frequently offer to God our labors, trials, privations, mortifications, contradictions, and all difficulties which confront us in our daily functions, and also those which are opposed to the eternal welfare of our pupils.

For our sufferings, when united to those of the Agonizing Heart of Jesus, will save their souls. We

should apply ourselves zealously, ardently, and lovingly, to this holy and salutary *Apostolate of Suffering,* with all the powers of our soul and strength of will. We should, moreover, be firmly convinced that in the trials and tribulations of the living members of Jesus Christ, there are concealed and hidden many treasures of grace. Let us seek them, therefore, in a spirit of faith, humility, zeal, and patience, both for our own spiritual perfection and for the salvation of those entrusted to our guidance.

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## III.

### COMMANDANT MARCEAU.

Commandant Marceau was one of those strong, impressive characters whose very personality and individuality was an illustrious exemplification of a truly noble and heroic soul. Conscious as he was of the instability of human glory and of the fickleness of an admiring world, he felt himself interiorly impelled to seek the higher and more imperishable goods. Hence, he forthwith relinquished his splendid worldly career to devote his life and talents to the missions of Oceanica. There we find him emulating the glorious example of St. Paul.

In a letter written to a young man, a native of Tonga, whom he had brought to Europe and whom he ardently wished to be associated with him in his apostolic labors, we read these remarkable and pregnant words: "The Lord has signified to me that

in order to work efficaciously for the conversion of Oceanica, we must *suffer much and pray much.*"

This should likewise be the strong conviction of all Christian teachers. They should never forget that unless their personal labors are seconded by grace, they can not effectively work in a field pertaining to the salvation of their pupils, for it is eminently a work of the supernatural order. But what they can do and what they should do, if they be fully alive to the grandeur of their calling, is to *pray and to suffer;* for they must needs *fill up,* according to St. Paul, *those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ.* (1) To ignore this fundamental principle is to be ignorant of what constitutes even the essence of the Christian Apostolate.

One day St. Ignatius was asked, whence spiritual life derived its greatest advantage, he replied: *From suffering.* Now, when we experience no tribulations from without, God frequently causes them to spring up in our soul. Moreover, when in the order of His loving Providence He has destined a soul for some great work or to eminent sanctity, He invariably visits him, like Job in olden times, with all manner of exterior and interior trials. These visitations are by no means light, but are always seemingly harsh and cruel, and, often, apparently beyond human endurance. Thus it is that *generous souls,* according to a great Saint, *find their Mount Thabor on Calvary's Height.*

This sentence condenses a world of thought. It expresses admirably and briefly the ineffable delights

(1) *Col., i, 24.*

which generous souls experience amid their manifold trials and tribulations. For the soul who gives himself up wholly and unreservedly to God, receives in recompense God Himself. God never allows Himself to be excelled in generosity by a creature. Moreover, is not He the very origin and centre of all our felicity? The cross is no burden to the courageous, heroic soul, for generosity gives him wings. *O how little, indeed, he really loves who yet loves so much!* "Thou hast deceived me, O my God! Thou hast deceived me!" exclaimed an intrepid soul. "For on entering Thy holy service I beheld only the cross and its tribulations, and lo! I have tasted but holy joys and sweet consolations!"

"Worldlings," said St. Bernard, "see, indeed, our cross, but they fail to perceive the exquisite perfume it exhales."

We may search the broad expanse of creation and we will seek in vain for one singe soul, who, though groaning under the crushing weight of suffering and misery, would be willing, after having given himself generously to God, to exchange places, even for a day, with the richest man on earth. Like the serpent, sin possesses the power of transforming even the most luscious fruit into poison; and fervor, like the bee, converts the most bitter liquids into delicious honey. Therefore, let us love God as the Saints did, and we, too, shall be happy like them.

Doubtless, Christian teachers encounter many obstacles in teaching and directing children. They experience, perhaps, great annoyance in having to bear with their defects, or they may even suffer keen dis-

appointments in being the object of their ingratitude. Withal, Christian educators should never be oblivious of the immense ransom which Jesus Christ paid for the world's redemption, for the expiation of their sins, and to merit heaven for them. Did our Divine Master suffer discouragement at the sight of the sea of humiliation and suffering?

Behold the unspeakable depth of sorrow and the overwhelming ocean of sadness which inundated His Soul in the Garden of Olives! Behold, again, the awful, bitter humiliations and opprobriums heaped upon Him in the Pretorium and on Calvary! Contemplate, likewise, the bewildering, agonizing bloody Sweat, the savagely cruel and inhuman Scourging, the painful and afflicting Crown of Thorns, and the excruciating, racking torture of the Crucifixion! After considering these heart-rending scenes of His most dolorous Passion, can Christian teachers still have the presumption, or, rather the temerity, to complain that their lot is too painful, too difficult? Oh! how far inferior are they yet to the bold courage of Prophets, to the intrepid spirit of Apostles, or to the heroic constancy of Martyrs!

But listen to the graphic account St. Paul gives of the sufferings endured for Christ's sake by the early Christians: *Others were racked not accepting deliverance, that they might find a better resurrection. And others had trials of mockeries and stripes, moreover also of bands and prisons. They were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins, being in want, distressed,*

*afflicted: of whom the world was not worthy; wandering in the deserts, in the mountains, and in dens, and in caverns of the earth. . . . . And therefore we also having so great a cloud of witnesses over our head, laying aside every weight and sin which surrounds, let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us: looking on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who having joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, now sitteth on the right of the Throne of God.* (1)

"He that loveth," Thomas à Kempis writes, "must willingly embrace all that is hard and bitter for the sake of his beloved, and never suffer himself to be turned away from him by any contrary occurrences whatsoever." (2)

Now, if Christian teachers really loved Jesus Christ, they would, after the heroic example of the Apostles, esteem themselves happy in being accounted worthy to suffer for His sake. Therefore, instead of complaining, they should cry out with the intrepid St. Francis Xavier: Yet more, O Lord, yet more!

*But rejoice, being partakers of the sufferings of Christ that when His glory shall be revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.* (3)

*Labor as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.* (4)

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*(1) Heb., xi, 35-38; xii, 1-2.*
*(2) The Following of Christ, Book III., ch. v, 8.*
*(3) St. Peter, iv, 13. (4) II. Tim., ii, 3.*

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## IV.

### THE TRUE SECRET OF SUCCESS IN TEACHING.

It is apparent to every observer of human activities that success in the attainment of any important undertaking depends chiefly upon the individual efforts exercised, and upon the extent of the application summoned to the work and its varying details. It is equally obvious that in proportion to the difficulties encountered, the greater should be the attention given to the nature of the obstacles presented as well as to the means to be adopted to achieve success. There is no denying the fact that the personal element is a powerful motive stimulating to action, and, for many, it is the secret which accounts for the unparalleled and almost superhuman efforts exerted in the accomplishment of their object. Moreover, it is also true that the higher and nobler the motive, the more untiring and unselfish the labor and its consequent sacrifices. Indeed, what motive-power could excel that which should actuate the Christian teacher? Our own personal experience and knowledge have taught us the wonderful power there is in love. Hence, the reason of the guiding principle in teaching is to be found in this significant word: LOVE OF DUTY. This should be, therefore, the great incentive, the principle, animating, directing, and controlling our actions in the classroom. This constitutes the true secret of our success in teaching.

Bishop Dupanloup expresses himself very forcibly on the secret of success in teaching. "Duty," says

he, "is very exacting, and particularly is this true when it is most difficult of performance. For duty must be loved, otherwise it will most certainly repel us. Nay more, it must be loved above everything else and for its own sake. It demands, furthermore, that everything should be sacrificed at its shrine. It requires, moreover, that we esteem ourselves as naught, that we may be wholly at its command. In a word, it emphatically ordains that it be loved as we love God Himself. There is, however, nothing incongruous in this prescription, for duty rightly considered is the Divine Will in our regard. And what is the Divine Will if it be not God Himself. Consequently, I shall not hesitate, neither am I deceived, in positively affirming that duty ceases to be a duty when it is no longer the expression of God's Will for us.

"This is, therefore, the reason that duty demands of us all our disinterestedness, love, and zeal. For, when fidelity to duty is without disinterestedness and zeal, or the heart is without love, then it is quite natural that everything becomes frozen, suffers, and dies. It is like a winter sun: light is, indeed, present, but heat, life, and fruitfulness are absent. Even when I say light is there, I am deceived, for it is a pale moonlight, which is altogether inadequate.

"In my long career as an educator, I have occasionally met some teachers who were given to their work, but it was only through a sense of cold, strict duty. Naturally, there enters into the work a multiplicity of little things necessary to its success, of which they never dreamed. For, in the great work of education, there are innumerable details that must

be carried out, depending not so much on knowledge, as upon the intuition of each teacher. But these professors seemed to have little or no understanding of them, and thus they inadvertently succeeded in destroying what they should have built up. Love alone has the power to understand all, as well as to divine, foresee, correct, and remedy all. How well does the mother understand her duty, because love animates and controls all her acts!"

Doubtless, the ever increasing and varying details of the educator's profession, though not of strict obligation, are, nevertheless, very important, since his ultimate success depends upon them. They can not, therefore, be ignored. Love, in this particular instance, and it alone can determine what is to be done under given circumstances, especially where knowledge fails.

"Put your whole soul into your work," as Father Poulette counsels. "Strive to do, not merely those things which would reasonably justify your strict obligations or satisfy your responsibility, but whatever love dictates to ameliorate, animate, quicken, purify, and ennoble a child's tender and impressionable heart, entrusted to your fatherly love and keeping. Your intellect, enlightened as it will be by a ray of vivifying love, will the more readily perceive itself awakened to a newer, happier world of ideas, of love, and of solicitude, than could have ever been suggested to it, had it been left to its own lights. Consequently, the greater your affection for children, the better will you understand what you should do for those whom you love, and whom love alone can teach."

Therefore, every Christian teacher who really desires to keep alive this sacred flame in his soul, or to prevent his heart from being parched and withered by the continuous struggle with his onerous duties, should attentively consider the following stimulating thoughts:

"Love is an excellent thing," we read in the *Following of Christ,* (1) "a great good indeed, which alone maketh light all that is burdensome, and equally bears all that is unequal.

"For it carries a burden without being burdened, and makes all that which is bitter, sweet and savory.

"The love of Jesus is noble and generous, it spurs us on to do great things, and excites us to desire always that which is more perfect.

"Love will tend upwards, and is not to be detained by things on earth.

"Love will be at liberty, and free from all worldly affection, lest its interior sight be hindered, lest it suffer itself to be entangled with any temporal interest, or cast low by losses.

"Nothing is sweeter than love; nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing more generous, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better in heaven or earth; for love proceeds from God, and can not rest but in God, above all things created.

"The lover flies, runs, and rejoices; he is free and not held.

"He gives all for all, and has all in all; because he rests in one Sovereign *Good* above all, from whom all good flows and proceeds.

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*(1) Book, iii, Ch. v.*

"He looks not at the gifts, but turns himself to the giver, above all good.

"Love often knows no measure, but is inflamed above all measure.

"Love feels no burden, values no labors, would willingly do more than it can; complains not of impossibilities, because it conceives that it may and can do all things.

"It is able, therefore, to do anything, and it performs and perfects many things, where he that loves not, faints and lies down.

"Love watches, and sleeping, slumbers not.

"When weary, is not tired; when straightened, is not constrained; when frightened, is not disturbed; but, like a lively flame, and a torch all on fire, it mounts upwards, and securely passes through all opposition.

"Whosoever loveth, knoweth the cry of his voice.

"A loud cry in the ears of God, is the ardent affection of the soul, which saith, O my God, my Love, Thou art all mine, and I am all Thine.

"Give increase to my love, that I may learn to taste, with the interior mouth of the heart, how sweet it is to love, and to swim, and to be dissolved in love.

"Let me be possessed by love, going above myself through excess of fervor and ecstasy.

"Let me sing the canticle of love, let me follow Thee, my Beloved, on high; let my soul lose herself in Thy praises, rejoicing exceedingly in Thy love.

"Let me love Thee more than myself, and my-

self only for Thee, who truly love Thee, as the law of love commands, which shines forth from Thee.

"Love is swift, sincere, pious, pleasant, and delightful; strong, patient, faithful, prudent, long-suffering, courageous, and never seeking itself; for where a man seeks himself, there he falls from love.

"Love is circumspect, humble and upright, not soft, nor light, not intent upon vain things; is sober, chaste, stable, quiet, and keeps a guard over all the senses.

"Love is submissive and obedient to superiors; in its own eyes mean and contemptible, devout and thankful to God, always turning and hoping in Him, even then when it tastes not the relish of God's sweetness, for there is no living in love without some pain or sorrow."

This, then is the beautiful Canticle of Love of the devout Thomas à Kempis. It is, assuredly, eminently calculated to stimulate our love to greater activity and fruitfulness. And withal, there may be found some teachers who may, indeed, be charmed with its delightful, captivating melody, but who will be faint-hearted in following its sublime teaching. Again, there may be others who will find it hard to understand, and who will declare that, if it be requisite to love to such an extent in the ministration of education, it were infinitely better never to attempt teaching rather than incur the risk of failure.

Now, this objection is rightly stated, providing, however, that these teachers are not called by God. If He, however, selected them, He will undoubtedly endow them with all the qualities necessary, or, per-



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haps, He has already bestowed upon them this generous spirit of love. Hence, let them place their confidence in Him, and work with a will, and success shall crown their feeble efforts. For Divine Providence acts always in accordance with a beneficent law, which is manifested with even more striking love in the moral order, than in the wonders of the material creation. Whenever God makes choice of a soul for some special work, or imposes upon him some grave responsibilities, He invariably accompanies them proportionately with a more intense love. Hence it is that the most difficult duties will become comparatively easy, and will be accomplished without any apparent effort. To the knowledge of this principle are we indebted for this familiar maxim of St. Augustine: *He who loves, suffers no pain.*

The wonderful capabilities of the human heart afford the most striking, thrilling exemplification of this admirable law. Now, if it be true of every human heart generally, then most undoubtedly is it specially true of a fond, loving mother's heart. For what is it that inspires this tender heart with its intrepid courage and almost superhuman energy? What is it that imparts to her feeble, delicate constitution its astonishing strength and vigor, its heroic power of endurance? LOVE. Let us proclaim then with the poet: "O spirit of love, how quick and fresh thou art!" (1)

Hence, the Christian teacher, who effectively desires to aid parents, by assuming the serious respon-

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*(1) Shakespeare, Twelfth Night, Act I.*

sibility of their children's education, must love those children with a parent's love.

Now, this burden is considerably lighter than we would naturally suppose it to be. For there is in every human breast a glowing hearth, in which the flame of devotedness and love is quickly enkindled, and which is admirably sustained by the breath of a divine vocation and by the graces which will always accompany it. Assuredly, if Christian teachers are faithful to the call which they have already heeded, God will, in His own good time and pleasure, favor them with this spirit of love, thus making their burden light and sweet. He will, moreover, bestow His choicest blessings upon them, because of their courageous fidelity to the duties which He has imposed upon them. Ah! then, indeed, will they have cause to wonder at the tender, powerful love which will take possession of their hearts! They will also perceive the power of a new light which shall henceforth illumine their path. They will, moreover, experience a kind of supernatural joy, sweetness, strength, and a quickening of action, whose secret has hitherto been to them a mystery, an unsolved enigma. Furthermore, experience testifies that many young teachers who at first had seriously entertained a doubt of ever attaining success in their art, but who had, nevertheless, devoted themselves with a good will and strong determination to their difficult task, from an inner conviction of having been called to it by Providence, in due time became distinguished men as well as efficient professors.

There is, perhaps, no truth with which young

teachers should be more deeply penetrated than that of the wonderful utility and power of devotedness and love. For whatever is done with devotedness, is done well. To those who love, all difficulties vanish, for they act with a bold, yet wise courage and heroic constancy, and the greater the hardships they have to withstand the more consolation do they draw from their work. Moreover, they are fully cognizant that difficulties tend to form character, to strengthen the will, and thereby ennoble the whole man.

It is, indeed, a refreshing, consoling thought to know that devotedness, everywhere and always, reaps a hundredfold, not only for what it does, but also for what it gives. It seems to multiply our powers and capabilities for doing, and adds perceptibly to our mental resources. Nay more, it seemingly imparts talents which were previously wanting to the intellect, and develops what it did not seem formerly to possess. Truly, love transforms, elevates, ennobles, and enlightens. It teaches everything. The affection which true educators have for little children, the study which they devote to their sweet, though lively, nature, open to their view a most extended horizon of human nature, reveal undreamed of secrets, and, thereby, tend immeasurably to their own moral and intellectual development.

Again, "while cold-hearted pedagogues are learnedly elucidating sterile theories, relative to certain deep questions whose merest elements they themselves have failed to understand, the truly Christian teacher," writes Father Poulette, "finds his whole

system established and explained, his doctrine formulated, and all his duties clearly traced out for him, and all contained in this one pregnant word: LOVE. . . . . And when he seeks before God what virtues he should cultivate to make himself worthy of his high mission, he ever and anon hears the same sweet, yet penetrating, voice, coming from the innermost sanctuary of his soul, saying: LOVE. . . . . Yes, love your pupils, struggle unceasingly against the feelings of weariness, disgust, and indifference which are aroused at the sight of their faults and defects, without, however, remaining blind to them. To counteract such unpleasant feelings, reflect rather upon the charming qualities which your pupils possess. Observe, for instance, the sweet innocence beaming in their countenances, the charm and simplicity of their avowals, the sincerity of their repentance, however evanescent, the natural goodness of their resolutions, though soon forgotten, and the generosity of their efforts, although lacking in perserverance. Note, likewise, their excellent dispositions in whatever good they do and the evil they avoid, and, no matter, what they may be and whatever else they may do, remember that you must love them."

Reflect on these beautiful words of the poet:

> "Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
> Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
> Thy fate is the common fate of all,
> Into each life some rain must fall,
> Some days must be dark and dreary." (1)

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*(1) Longfellow.*

## V.

### HELPFUL THOUGHTS IN TRIALS.

There are moments when frail nature is so crushed under the heavy burden of its sorrows, that consecutive thinking is seemingly out of question. Yes, when

> "The hopes of youth fall thick in the blast
> And the days are dark and dreary,"

that is the time when young Christian teachers need a kind, helping hand to guide them through bewildering labyrinths of gloom and trial. Hence, the following helpful thoughts are suggested:

I.—Our Own Sins.—God willingly accepts, in expiation of our many sins, the sufferings which we may have to endure in the accomplishment of our duty. Can we then consider these sufferings too severe or overwhelming, we who, perhaps, may have often richly deserved hell?

II.—The Example of the Saints.—What have they not done for Jesus Christ? With what courage, resignation, and joy have they not endured trials and crosses, aye, a thousand times more cruel and crushing than any we may have to withstand or support? What are our sufferings and labors compared to those of the Apostles, Martyrs, and Missionaries? Let us reflect also upon the heroic patience and constancy of St. John Baptist de la Salle and his first companions. Surely we will not have the presumption to claim that our sufferings are at all equal to theirs, or that they can even approach them. *Take, my*

*brethren,* St. James tells us, *for an example of suffering evil, of labor and patience, the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord.* (1)

III.—THE FRUIT OF OUR LABORS.—If we fulfill the duties of our sublime calling in the proper spirit, what inestimable good may we not accomplish! How many sins will we not have prevented! How many virtues will we not have cultivated and caused to be practised! How many souls will we not have helped to save! Our work is, indeed, laborious, but what benefits are conferred on our pupils, on their families, on society, and even on the Church! O how agreeable is our work to God, and how beneficial to ourselves!

IV.—THE PROMISED RECOMPENSE.—Oh! what a beautiful and resplendent crown God has prepared for those Christian teachers, who devote their lives, inspiring little children with a dread for sin and a love for virtue! *They that instruct many to justice,* we read in Daniel, *shall shine as stars for all eternity.* (2)

If the responsibility weighs heavily upon us, or if tribulations and afflictions overwhelm us, and if trials oppress us, then, let the promised recompense strengthen and re-animate our failing courage.

Oh! if we could but see the heavens open, like St. Stephen, and if it were given us to behold the crown which Jesus is preparing for us, then, indeed, would we complain that our cross was not heavy enough! In the ardor of our soul we would ask our Lord to increase our sufferings that, like the saints, we could

(1) c., v, 10. (2) c., xii, 3.

increase the splendor of our heavenly crown. Yes, far from seeking and asking for consolation and rest, we would exclaim with the heroic St. Theresa: *Lord, to suffer or die, to suffer or die!*

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## VI.

### SALUTARY COUNSELS OR ANTIDOTES TO DISCOURAGEMENT.

1. Let teachers look upon their crosses in the sacred wounds of Jesus.

2. Let them join the bitterness of their sufferings to those of His Chalice.

3. Let them bear well in mind that our Divine Saviour takes a part in all their afflictions, and, in a manner, suffers with them. Yes, let them not doubt it, for He is constantly with them, and He sees all they are doing for love of Him.

4. According to His promise, *He will consider as done to Himself* whatever they shall do for the dear little ones confided to their loving care.

5. In all their tribulations, let teachers have recourse to prayer. For He who permits the trial for their own good, will also give them the strength to support it.

6. Let teachers remember that they are doing His work, and can they for a moment suppose that He will refuse them the necessary aid and strength?

7. Let them call Mary, the Mother of the Afflicted, to their assistance, and she will assuredly obtain for them courage and consolation.

8. Let them also invoke St. John Baptist de la

Salle and all the saints who have sanctified themselves while engaged in the ministry of teaching.

9. Let them frequently partake of the Bread of the Strong, and let them rest assured that no trial will overwhelm them.

10. In moments of trial, let each of them say from the depths of his heart: "O my God, I accept whatever shall be agreeable to Thee, when and as much as Thou wilt! . . . . . O Adorable Heart of Jesus! I offer Thee all my works and sufferings in union with Thy infinite merits! . . . . . May the most Just, the most Holy, and the most Adorable Will of God be done in all things, and may it be praised and glorified for ever and ever. Amen."

If the Christian teacher walk in the way thus traced out for him, God will bless him; he will, in the language of St. Paul, *exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulations,* (1) and a glorious reward will be his portion forever.

"He who knows how to suffer," says the *Following of Christ,* "is conqueror of himself, lord of the world, a friend of Christ, and an heir of heaven." (2)

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*(1) II. Cor., vii, 4. (2) Book II., Ch. III, 3.*

## FOURTH OBJECTION.

### TO TEACH CHILDREN WHO DO NOT PROFIT BY THE CARE BESTOWED UPON THEM IS DISCOURAGING.

"Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly—angels could do no more."—*Young.*

The future is indeed a very intricate problem. All that a finite intellect can do in relation to future events is to speculate with a greater or less degree of probability. Experience teaches the futility of even the best human calculations. Investigate the vast field of science and note carefully how much of the purely speculative element enters into its theories. It is at best only problematical. Thus it is in every department of human knowledge, for absolute certainty is beyond its claim. Hence, why speculate about the certain or uncertain results which may be obtained in the ministry of teaching? Can we not perceive that we are bordering on a domain which eludes the most precise investigations of science? For it is not possible to compare moral, with physical science. The data are altogether different, hence no common criterion can safely be adopted to measure or compare results. Besides, we are dealing with one of the most perplexing of psychological questions, one which presents untold difficulties even to the keenest moralist and philosopher. These words of the poet convey a deep meaning to the young teacher:

"O that a man might know
The end of this day's business, ere it come." (1)

And now, what is the practical point of view? Suppose that we compare the class to a field. Here the husbandman who has expectations of gathering an abundant harvest, wisely sets to work, taking advantage of every available means to ensure it. When the soil is properly prepared, he sows the seed, good or bad, without wasting any of his precious time in vain speculations, as to whether or not this or that seed will be productive. He scatters with a liberal hand, for, from his past experience, he is perfectly well aware that if some seed will remain sterile, there will always be a large proportion of it that will undoubtedly fructify. Personally he has done all that could reasonably be expected, and, consequently, he does not worry about results. We ought diligently to study our plans and carefully to survey our field of action. Shakespeare has divined this important secret of success, when he says:

"Now, whether it be some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know
While yet I live to say.—*This thing's to do.*" (2)

Many in following this advice of the poet have attained success and eminence in spite of the greatest obstacles. Ancient History tells us that Demosthenes was forced to contend with every defect which could beset one who strove for oratorical fame. How he rose superior to all these hindrances, how he swept

*(1) Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, Act V.*
*(2) Hamlet, Act IV.*

away all barriers that stood in his way, how he became the illustrious orator, and how his persuasive gift of speech alone checked the ambitious plans of Philip of Macedon, all this is too well known to call for rehearsing. In imitation of this dauntless hero of old, the Christian teacher will lay hold of his opportunities. Putting aside all discouraging thoughts, he will busy himself with the present only, and leave the future to God. Our recompense besides will principally depend upon our labor and the purity of our intention, rather than upon results obtained. What more natural, than to meet pupils who will not profit by our instructions. This truth is as old as man himself. Our individual experience is but an additional confirmation of the fact.

The Christian teacher who is zealously striving to save a class, and succeeds in saving one child only, should be content. For is not a single soul of greater value than the whole material universe?

We may also draw a salutary lesson from the action of a humane, generous man on witnessing a shipwreck. Instantly the one thought of saving the ship's crew possesses his whole soul. He acts. There is no time for speculation. Procrastination here would mean death. Despite the raging sea, he casts himself upon the angry waves to go to the rescue. He struggles bravely, heroically. A thousand dangers oppose his generous efforts, but instead of being discouraged, he is stimulated to greater exertions to attain his object. Withal, he rescues but one and only one of the crew from a cold watery grave. In his great joy, he is unmindful of all the dangers he risked

and the hardships endured in saving this one man. He is grieved that so many lives have been lost, but overjoyed that he has been able to save one. So with the Christian teacher; he should consider his efforts well repaid, if only one of those whom he instructs, profits by his labors.

A teacher who is at all acquainted with the caprices of human nature, readily understands that all pupils will not remain good and virtuous. Consequently, if several children of a class, whom he had carefully taught to know, love, and serve God, should unhappily be seduced by evil companions or ensnared by the impetuosity of their passions, he should not, on that account, become disheartened. A crisis will come in their lives when these erring youths, owing to solid instruction, fervent prayers, and the paternal kindness and solicitude which he had lavished upon them, will return, to the path of virtue, peace, and happiness.

The following instance serves as an excellent illustration of the point in question:

Shortly after the dark, terrible days of the French Revolution in 1793, when the Church of France had hardly risen from her ruins, there lay dying, in one of the hospitals, a brave old soldier who had fought in the army of the Republic. To speak of confession in those evil days to a veteran of the Revolution was deemed rather hazardous, for religion had been regarded by many as a myth.

Fortunately there was one who was possessed of more moral courage than his companions and whom the religion which he had practised in his youth and

which he still loved, inspired with a deep sympathy for the dying man. This one ventured to say to him: "My brave friend, the moment when you are about to appear in the grand final review before God is rapidly approaching: would you not be better prepared for this last inspection by burnishing your arms by a good confession?"

"Certainly," replied the dying hero, "I shall gladly avail myself of your suggestion on condition that you call in an old, experienced priest."

Delighted to be of service to his companion in arms he went quickly in search of a venerable clergyman, a confessor of the faith, who had escaped the guillotine. The worthy ecclesiastic obeyed the summons with alacrity, and approached the bedside of the dying soldier, offering to prepare him for confession.

"That is altogether needless, Reverend Father," said the brave soldier. "I will only request that you patiently hear my confession, and I think that I will satisfactorily comply with the prescribed conditions."

The old hero who had not flinched from duty amid blood and carnage, nobly acquitted himself of his last duty on earth. Nothing had escaped his memory, even regarding the number and circumstances of his offenses, so exact was he.

Surprised to hear the old soldier go through the confession with such ease and excellent dispositions, particularly as he had not approached the sacraments since his childhood, the venerable priest could not refrain from expressing his astonishment.

"There is really nothing wonderful in that, Rever-

end Father," answered the dying man; "I am an old pupil of the Christian Brothers. They taught me so well and thoroughly how to approach the sacraments, and so indelibly was their teaching impressed upon my mind, that I have never forgotten it."

Thus disposed the brave man received the last sacraments and died a holy death, the worthy fruit of the good education he got in the Christian School.

The good priest, struck by the enlightened faith of the old hero, immediately made inquiries, as to whether those Brothers had yet returned to France. After much searching, he was at last informed that the Brothers whom he sought, were living in Lyons and teaching a school under the protection of Cardinal Fesch. He hastened thither, where he met Brother Frumence, the Vicar General of the Institute, and so earnest was his pleading with him, that he succeeded in obtaining three Brothers to open a school in his Parish. The school has since flourished, and has been productive of much good.

Little did the religious teacher who taught this hero in childhood, ever dream what precious fruit his lessons would bear, after having been dormant for so many years. Little do we know the good we are doing, but the good is no less real. God not unfrequently hides from us the results of our labors that He may exercise our humility and test our faith.

There can be no possible doubt that many children do not profit by our instruction, but there is also the certainty that there are many who do benefit and live in accordance with our teaching. Others again may be found who, while not possessing the moral

courage to lead Christian lives, are nevertheless restrained from the commission of many crimes, because of the excellent lessons they had received in childhood days. But, alas, what becomes of those unhappy children who have not received a Christian education?

Scenes taken from actual life are generally apt to make a deeper impression on the mind than lengthy arguments, though well and pointedly chosen and proved. The result of a training from which the religious element was entirely eliminated, is apparent in the incident which we will now relate.

There lived in a certain village, in the vicinity of Paris, an aged married couple who were freethinkers, and who had been to their only son a living example of practical atheism.

The young man had attained the critical period of his adolescence, the period of awakened passions. He saw no reason why he should govern and restrain them, and, naturally, indoctrinated as he had been in the pernicious principles of atheism, he allowed them full sway. For atheism is destructive of all morality, therefore of all responsibility. Being anxious that their son should figure and shine in society, the parents introduced him into the gayeties of the fast Parisian world, thinking that thereby their only pride and hope would speedily gain recognition, distinction, and fame. The young man, however, no sooner found himself in the fashionable whirl of a fastidious society, than he abandoned himself to its sensual pleasures with the freedom and excess that always characterize those who have no other and

higher guiding principles than their animal instincts. To keep apace with his young libertine associates, he became a spendthrift, and, as it generally happens, contracted heavy debts to gratify his rounds of pleasure. Conscience, under such circumstances, is deadened, and remorse is cast to the winds. Gratification of passion becomes the sole law and sacrificial altar, for morality has long since lost its controlling influence.

One evening, while the aged couple were quietly sitting before their glowing hearth, discussing the gravity of their family affairs, the son burst suddenly in upon them and in loud, angry words demanded money. They looked kindly and beseechingly at their idol, and mildly answered that they had already divested themselves of their possessions; ruin was at their door, for every article of value in the house had been sold to satisfy his repeated demands upon them, and that now they were utterly powerless to honor his request.

Thereupon the miserable young man, instead of being seized with remorse for having brought disgrace and ruin upon his house and parents, was frenzied by his ungovernable passions, and raising his heavy walking cane, dealt a murderous blow to the authors of his life.

Both fell wounded and bleeding at the feet of the insatiable ingrate, crying out with pitying accents: "Spare us, spare us, for the love of God." But the parricide sneeringly replied: "There is no God."

The unfortunate parents were compelled to taste

the bitter fruit of the irreligious training they had given to their proud heir. *Reason* became his standard, and *passion* his shrine.

What countless and enormous crimes are prevented by a good Christian education! To prevent even one such crime as that just related, we should be willing to sacrifice a thousand lives.

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## I.

### A COURAGEOUS AND PERSEVERING ZEAL EFFECTS A HAPPY TRANSFORMATION OF THE CHILD'S DEFECTIVE CHARACTER.

To ignore the difficulties that confront young teachers in transforming a wayward child's habits, would certainly be to lack appreciation of the great work of Christian education. Defects of a physical nature present frequently less difficulty than those pertaining to the moral character. It is precisely here that the tact and ability of true Christian educators are thoroughly exercised. It is here also that they can display their knowledge of human nature. To know what to do, when and how to do it, belongs only to years of varied experience, seasoned with a persevering, undaunted, and enlightened zeal that is ever willing to work, in season and out of season, until its end is attained.

Probably, the placing before the young teacher the method and experience of a man who spent many

years among children, may prove of greater practical value than any lengthened discourse or analytical arguments. Perhaps no better illustration can be given than the eminently useful method which Bishop Dupanloup explains in his *Treatise on Education.*

"What incalculable labor and fatigue fall to the lot of a teacher who earnestly strives to transform the character of children! That he must necessarily resort to repressive measures in his dealings with them is quite evident; but this restraint should also be of a gentle, persuasive, reasonable, and Christian character. Moreover, this method of subduing should preclude all corporal punishment.

"To have recourse to rude violence and physical force is perhaps easy of accomplishment; but it tends to ruin rather than to save. The educator should teach children how to become masters of themselves. While this is the only proper and decisive method, I will, by no means, deny the great difficulty of its attainment. It is the evangelical *compelle intrare,* that is, their transformation should begin with themselves and from within. To know how to render it conducive toward good, is of paramount importance. Indeed, it is most essential that persuasion be employed to bring even the most intractable pupils to terms, and I will affirm that I know of no more laborious task in the ministry of teaching. Consequently, to succeed the teacher must pursue an unrelenting course of kindness and tenderness, united with a firm, yet gentle, severity.

"From the moment a child is noticed to deviate

from moral rectitude, he should be subjected to the vigilant eye and strict supervision of the teacher. Then, also, it becomes necessary that he be constantly warned and exhorted, reproved and encouraged, everywhere and by every one, but with such prudence as not to excite the suspicion that he is particularly followed, and without causing him undue annoyance. Personally, I never, on such occasions, ceased nor relented my vigilance. To attain my object, I devoted thereto my time, and much of it. I rallied to my aid every one in the Institution: the professors, the confessor, the best pupils, those of gentle and engaging manners, and even the parents. Naturally, as Rector of the College, the greatest share in the transformation of the child devolved upon me, and I ordinarily carried my point and won the victory. Only at this price can souls be gained.

"Ah! St. Paul has excellent cause for saying: *My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you.* (1) It is truly a labor which must be accompanied by tears and suffering.

"On such critical occasions, I would speak to the child with great kindness, even tenderness, but, likewise, with all becoming seriousness. I spoke out my mind freely, then laid down the law with precision, and revealed to him my motives, namely, the sacred interests of the Institution, dwelling also upon his individual good. I was exceedingly particular to place before him these matters in clearest light, and, then, after having invoked God's blessing upon him, I admitted him and introduced him to the professors and

(1) *Gal. iv, 19.*

students. Not unfrequently did it happen that children, of whom I had received the most detrimental reports, and who had a reputation for depravity and incorrigibleness, turned over an entirely new leaf and became good and virtuous. Despite the fears which had taken possession of me concerning their reformation of character, I was often agreeably astonished to perceive all the serious faults and defects vanish in due course of time, so that even the very traces of their former vices had been wholly obliterated.

"I have still a very vivid recollection of one striking instance of a pupil whose parents begged and entreated me to grant them the special privilege of admitting him into the College. They candidly acknowledged that they had exhausted all their resources and were now in a sad dilemma as to what course to pursue, for the boy had gotten wholly beyond their control. Before giving them any decision, however, I determined to examine the boy, and I will admit that I was favorably impressed with him. I perceived that he had splendid resources of mind, and, at bottom, possessed a character of great possibilities, if it were properly developed; but, unfortunately, until then, it had been turned altogether in a wrong direction.

"After my usual conversation with the new pupil, I added the following remark which generally proved very salutary and effectual: 'My dear child, your faults and defects up to the present moment have been a constant source of annoyance and disappointment to your dear parents. If you persist in your evil ways, they will prove your ruin both now and hereafter.

. . . . . You must positively make up your mind to correct them and cast them behind you. In crossing this threshold, you must leave them outside and enter without them. Thus far these bad habits served only to disguise a character which is capable of nobler acts. You must, henceforth, put them aside and appear as you really are' . . . . . 'I will cheerfully receive the boy,' I said to the parents, 'but I will not take his failings, for they must never again be mentioned in this house.'

"The boy brightened up and promised, and he was true to his word. I was simply astonished and his parents more so, for not one of his many faults ever appeared or were recorded against him. He was truly reformed. Indeed, I frequently said to several of the professors: 'It is truly incredible! The parents were either sadly deceived, or else they assumed appearances for realities.' The boy very naturally entered with zest into all the college sports, and enjoyed them with all the impetuosity of his youth. They never were to him, however, the cause of any serious fault. If he would, at times, seemingly forget himself, a look sufficed to recall to his mind his still stronger resolutions.

"Although he had completed his fourteenth year, he had not yet received his First Communion, owing to his past wayward conduct. This privilege was granted to him with us. Never shall I forget the expression of his countenance on that happy day. Though ordinarily severe, even to a degree of harshness, it was, on that morning, suddenly transfigured by an angelic brightness which words are inadequate

to express. I could give you his name, but I will deny myself the liberty, for he is no longer on earth, and his dear name is now sacred to me. When death claimed him, he was twenty, in the flower of his youth. He died a peaceful, happy death. His Christian name was Felix, and I would frequently say to him: 'Since we both have the same baptismal name, let us strive to be an honor to each other.' He did more. I sincerely hope that he looks down from heaven, where I trust he is, upon those who loved him on earth, and that he is their intercessor before the throne of mercy. . . . . But enough, I must refrain from saying another word. I owe it to his sorrowing mother who may perchance some day read these pages."

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## II.

### A CELEBRATED SAYING OF ST. IGNATIUS.

*If I could, by the actual zeal of my whole life, prevent the commission of one single mortal sin, I would consider the time admirably spent, and deem my labors abundantly rewarded.*

It is thus that we, too, should reason and act. Now supposing that we could really foresee that, despite all our devoted, disinterested zeal, one of our pupils would deliberately wander from the path of virtue which we had traced out for him, we should still rightly hold that the labors of our whole life were advantageously employed, if we had succeeded in re-

straining him from offending God even for one hour, and thereby prevented a single mortal sin. To act thus is to be animated by a true zeal for God's honor and glory. It is, moreover, a positive proof of the purity of our intention.

Take, as an instance, a man who is in search of a treasure. He is indefatigable in his labor, and even after toiling hard he is often doomed to bitter disappointment. But he is not discouraged. On the contrary, he handles his pick with renewed efforts, and if, after weeks of weary labor, he should chance to find a nugget or two of gold, he thinks that his time was well spent and his labors sufficiently recompensed.

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## III.

### AN ARDENT ZEAL SHOULD CHARACTERIZE THE TEACHER'S MINISTRY, ALTHOUGH HE BE FIRMLY CONVINCED OF THE FUTILITY AND THE STERILITY OF HIS LABORS.

Suppose now, for the sake of argument, that a teacher even after having conscientiously employed all the resources suggested by reason, knowledge, and experience, yet can not succeed in bringing up in a Christian manner even one child, or in preventing him from wrong-doing even for one short hour, what then? Even though this extreme hypothesis were true, he should not desist from instructing, educating, and inciting the children to the practice of virtue with

all the ardor and zeal he can possibly exercise. This is the teaching gleaned from one of St. Bernard's letters to Pope Eugenius III., who had formerly been one of his disciples.

He exhorts him to set himself seriously to the task of reforming the morals of his people. After a lengthy and powerful exposition of the crying need of such reformation, he adds: "Perhaps you can hardly repress a smile at my ingenuousness, in urging you so earnestly to the accomplishment of a so seemingly chimerical project as the reform of a people who are inflated with pride, turbulent of spirit, and undisciplined in morals, whose normal condition seems one of rebellion, and who will only reluctantly submit to the yoke, when constrained thereto by an absolute impossibility of further resistance.

"Now this being the prevailing state of morality among the people, what think you is the natural inference as to your conduct? You are undoubtedly confronted with an impossible work, but should you, therefore, renounce all efforts, because, forsooth, they are condemned to prove futile? Indeed not; and neither should you, on that account, abandon all hope, nor repine and become discouraged. Candidly, I acknowledge that you can not effect a universal cure, but you can, at least, apply the necessary remedies to the existing evil, and thus strive to ameliorate the condition and bring about a more healthful state of morals, and that is precisely what God demands of you: *Have they made thee ruler?* we read in *Ecclesiasticus* (1) . . . . . *Have care of them.*

(1) c. xxxii, 1-2.

Now God does not say to you: 'Heal them,' for such an ordinance exceeds the limitation of the obligations, incumbent upon those whose duty consists in leading others, for only possible things are comprised in such limitations. A physician has not always the power to restore perfect health to his patients, and certainly no reasonable man can expect it. The duty of his position does not require it, but what it does imperatively demand is that *he neglect nothing in his power to bring about a perfect restoration to health.*

"Do you demand, perhaps, more formal testimony than any that I have yet adduced? Listen, then, to the Apostle of nations: *I have labored more abundantly than all they.* (1) Observe he does not say: 'I have *converted* more souls than all they,' for he is well aware that *every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor,* (2) and not in accordance with the measure of his success. Emulate his example: plant, water, and cultivate the vineyard of the Lord, and you shall have complied with the duties of your high station. The growth and fruit are not your concern, but God's, and he will provide and dispose of it, when in His Divine Wisdom, the opportune moment arrives; but whether it does or does not come, should be a matter of holy indifference to you, because according to the testimony of Holy Writ, *The Lord renders to the just the wages of their labors,* (3) without the measure of their success. Hence, even if you should not accomplish any good, your recompense shall be as great as if you had converted thousands of souls.

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*(1) I. Cor. xv, 10. (2) I. Cor. iii, 8.*
*(3) Wisdom, x, 17.*

"God forbid, that in speaking thus, I should have ever thought of placing limits to His power and goodness. Were the Romans more hardened than they really are and were their hearts as stone, *God is able of these stones,* as St. Matthew relates, *to raise up children to Abraham.* (1) *Who knoweth but he will return,* declared the prophet Joel, (2) *and forgive and leave a blessing behind him.*"

It is unnecessary for us to enter into any detail regarding St. Bernard's letter to Pope Eugenius. Suffice it to say that which chiefly concerns us now is, neither the merit nor the reward of our labors is effected by our success. Both merit and reward exclusively depend on the manner in which we acquit ourselves of the duties of our ministry. Whence we draw this important inference, that however unsatisfactory the fruit of our labor among souls may be, it should not by any means deter us from laboring with even greater courage and redoubled zeal.

We will find the same teaching in one of the revelations of the Blessed Virgin to St. Bridget: "The friends of God should never grow weary in His service, but should labor incessantly that the wicked become good, and the good, perfect." He who cried out to all those passing by, that Christ was the Son of God, most probably made an impression on only a few, nevertheless, he obtained the same reward as if he had induced all those who heard him to believe in the Divinity of the Saviour.

Again, take the instance of two laborers engaged by a master to excavate the side of a rocky hill. One

*(1) c. iii, 9. (2) c. ii, 14.*

chances to strike a vein of the purest gold, while the other meets with no success. Now on the hypothesis that the two had labored with equal steadfastness and fidelity, is it not reasonable to suppose both entitled to the same reward?

"There are certain undertakings," writes St. Francis de Sales, "that God wishes us to commence, while others are destined to complete them. The husbandman is not blamed for failing to reap an abundant harvest, but he is, for neglecting to cultivate the field." God ordains some men to be sowers and others to be reapers. Some build the foundation of an edifice, while others complete the superstructure. It fell to the share of David to amass the materials for the Temple, but it was Solomon's privilege to build. We should, therefore, be resigned to cease whenever God so ordains; for He wishes us to draw only a certain measure of glory. He can always find workmen to complete His work, whenever it is His good pleasure to perfect it.

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## IV.

### CONSOLATION FOR THE TEACHER WHO EFFECTS LITTLE GOOD IN HIS MINISTRY.

To desire good is certainly an excellent thing. To evince a too great eagerness, however, or to wish to succeed on too large a scale, or after our own manner of thinking, is to be attributed to our self-love rather

than to the love of God and zeal for His honor and glory.

We should content ourselves with doing only the possible good, that is, doing what we can do, praying, esteeming ourselves as unprofitable servants, and leaving the results of our efforts to God's benign and merciful Providence.

We all know how sensibly some natures are affected by passing events. These good souls are always ripe for speculation and take pleasure in forecasting the results of their labors. Hence, young teachers who enter inordinately upon their work, being often guided by an unenlightened zeal, are usually disappointed in their expectations. Experience teaches that the reality is altogether different from the charming prospects which a too vivid imagination pictures to impressionable minds. Discouragement is the unfortunate consequence. Not unfrequently, however, the effect of failure is productive of good. For the unsuccessful are forced to enter into themselves to analyze their motives, and to examine the control they exercise over themselves. This tends, naturally, to a scrutiny of their character, and thus they discover in what it may be defective. Moreover, they will appreciate the difficulty which they experience in correcting their own defects as well as the little progress they may have made in their own perfection. If this introspection be sincere, it will teach them patience and resignation. For they who thoroughly understand themselves, will be less severe on others.

"If thou canst not," says Thomas à Kempis, (1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., Chapt. XVI.*

"make thyself such a one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have others according to thy liking?

"He that has true and perfect charity seeks himself in no one thing, but desires only the glory of God in all things.

"Endeavor to be patient in supporting other's defects and infirmities, of what kind soever; because thou also hast many things which others must bear withal.

"We would have others strictly corrected, but are not willing to be corrected ourselves.

"Thus it is evident how seldom we weigh our neighbor in the same balance with ourselves.

"But how great each one's virtue is, best appears on occasion of adversity; for occasions do not make a man frail, but show what he is."

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## V.

### JESUS CHRIST, THE MODEL, FOR YOUNG TEACHERS WHO ARE DISCOURAGED.

*Place before your pupils for imitation only the best at your command* is a sound pedagogic principle. It is axiomatic. It follows that if nothing imperfect or defective should be presented to pupils, then certainly only the perfect, *par excellence,* should be proposed as a model to young teachers. Now, who was more perfect than Jesus Christ? Hence we will present *Him, the Teacher* of teachers, as a model for all

educators. The more they resemble Him, the closer they follow His method, the more familiar they are with His doctrines, and the more profound their study of His life, the greater and more far-reaching will be the efforts of their teaching and example.

Let us imagine ourselves in Judea, the eye-witness of Our Lord's active ministry, and draw our own conclusions. Yes, "were we really to hear and see Jesus Christ actually engaged," says Rodriguez, "would we dare proclaim that He taught only His disciples, or men who were eager for His word, or that He preached only to an admiring people that longed for His doctrine and were eager to follow Him? Nay, would we not find Him teaching just as willingly His most pronounced enemies, those who came to lay surprises for Him, and even those who had designedly come to entrap Him in His words and thereby seek his ruin? Do we not also find Him in familiar converse with the poor Samaritan woman, discussing with her the great question in dispute between the two peoples, whether it was absolutely necessary to adore God in Jerusalem, or if He could be worshipped equally as well elsewhere? Undoubtedly some one may say, but Jesus Christ foresaw that this poor Samaritan woman would come to believe in Him, and, consequently, derive the intended fruit from His conversation with her. Doubtless, He was aware of the effect of His teaching upon her, but was He not equally certain of the results of His preaching to the Pharisees, Sadducees, and so many others, who were far from being favorably disposed toward Him or willing to accept His saving doctrines, and who would, moreover,

be His cruel persecutors and finally deliver Him up to death? We will see Him, nevertheless, either asking them questions, and thus forcing them to the truth by their admission, or else answering the questions which they had addressed to Him with all the malice of forethought. Do we perceive even one single soul, convinced by the power of His word, that rendered real honor to the truth by following Him? Shall we say that He was ignorant of the success of His efforts and that He did not foresee their sterility? By no means, for He was perfectly aware that, in opposing their obduracy, His preaching would be futile to the greater number of them, and would rather tend to increase their obstinacy and add to the guilt of their condemnation. Nevertheless, His infinite Wisdom, anticipating this result, did not cause Him to relinquish His zeal, but rather incited Him to even greater activity. He wishes thus to teach those who were ignorant of the success of their efforts, that they should never relax in their zeal, nor give way to discouragement, however poor or even barren the results of their zealous ministry might appear."

Now, what positive knowledge can we really have as to the fruits of our teaching? Those very instructions which, in our own estimation, are deemed no better than sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, are, perhaps in God's merciful design, intended to effect the salvation of some child in our class. Moreover, the children, who may now be worrying us by their seeming listlessness, will, in due time, remember our zealous exhortations, and, touched by grace, will produce abundant fruits of justice, and become truly con-

verted. For we have sown the good seed in their hearts, and that was the share allotted to us. Therefore, no matter what may happen, we should not cease laboring, or grow weary in the saving of souls.

"For Thine own purposes, Thou hast sent
The strife and the discouragement." (1)

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## VI.

### PRESERVING ZEAL IS CROWNED WITH SUCCESS.

"Press bravely onward!—not in vain
Your generous trust in human kind;
The good which bloodshed could not gain
*Your peaceful zeal shall find.*"—*Whittier.*

"The Apostle of Carthagena, St. Peter Claver, effected," says Daurignac, his biographer, "innumerable conversions. Many of these, however, were obtained only at the cost of great and painful mortifications, long prayers, and after many bitter tears. God, however, always in the end granted him the salvation of souls which were purchased at such a price, and frequently the Divine Goodness worked miracles to give His servant that consolation as a reward for years of patient waiting.

"Among the crowds who daily presented themselves at the College doors to receive the alms distributed by St. Peter Claver, there happened to be one, a Turk, who possessed a most intractable nature. Insensible to the benefits bestowed, harsh, and even

*(1) Longfellow, Christus.*

cruel, Ahmed repaid all the tender solicitude of the good Father with insults and abuse. Nevertheless, he seemed the beggar by predilection, the favorite of the saintly Jesuit, because Ahmed was to him a source of merit and a soul hard to gain.

"The struggle between the ingratitude of Ahmed and the charity of St. Peter Claver continued for years. Early one morning, however, the poor Turk came and acknowledged himself vanquished. Casting himself at the feet of the Saint, he tearfully pleaded: 'My Father: . . . . . Pardon me; forgive me! . . . . . I can no longer withstand so much goodness, mildness, and sweetness. Instruct me and make me a Christian. . . . . Your religion has power to make me better than that of the Prophet!' . . . . . .

"That was one of the brightest, happiest moments of St. Peter Claver's life. Tenderly he pressed the Turk to his heart, and offered him to God with tears of gratitude. He earnestly set about instructing and preparing him for baptism. Ahmed was baptized, and, under the Saint's guidance, became not only one of the most devoted Christians, but also one of the meekest and humblest.

"Thus did God reward the patience and long-suffering of this apostle, by granting him the soul that was bought by such tender charity, suffering, and sacrifices."

When perceiving the apparent sterility of our efforts, which cost us many days and months of worry and patient endurance, we should not repine or give way to discouragement, but we should rather redouble

our zeal, multiply our prayers and sacrifices. We may rest assured that God will bless our intentions and labors, and render our ministry fruitful in good, and grant us abundant fruits of grace and salvation.

"A prudent man," says Sophocles, "must neglect no circumstance." Let us humbly learn to know the ways of the Lord.

"For there are many, who, when things succeed not well with them," says Thomas à Kempis, "presently grow impatient and slothful.

"Now the *way of man is not always in his own power;* but it belongs to God to give and to comfort when He will, and as much as He will, and to whom He will, and as it shall please Him, and no more. . .

"Those who are as yet but novices, and inexperienced in the way of the Lord, if they will not govern themselves by the counsel of discreet persons, will be easily deceived and overthrown." (1)

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*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III, chap. VII, 2.*

# FIFTH OBJECTION.

## SUCCESS IS IMPOSSIBLE, OWING TO THE HARDSHIPS OF THE CLASS.

"To Truth's house there is a single door,
Which is experience. He teaches best,
Who feels the hearts of all men in his breast,
And knows their strength or weakness through his own."
—*Bayard Taylor.*

"Our grand business," writes Carlyle, "is not to *see* what lies dimly at a distance, but to *do* what lies clearly at hand."

"There is the influence of *habit,*" remarks Tilley, (1) "which enters so largely as a factor into all real and permanent success that it can not safely be ignored; while, mingling itself with all one's efforts, there must be that deep enthusiasm, that *passion* for one's work, whatever it be, that makes toil easy and holds one unflinchingly to his task."

The poet admirably conveys the thought which gives the key-note to the situation:

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on the dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best." (2)

"In the lexicon of youth, which fate reserves for a bright manhood, there is no such word as *fail!*" (3) The reason is evident, for an energetic, determined

(1) *Masters of the Situation.* (2) Baily, *Festus.*
(3) Bulwer-Lytton, Drama, *Richelieu.*

will triumphs over all difficulties and overcomes all obstacles. Why, then, declare success impossible?

Doubtless, we all remember the significant saying of a French general who, when his soldiers declared it impossible to execute certain orders, owing to seeming, insurmountable obstacles, emphatically exclaimed: "*Impossible!* why my brave men, the word IMPOSSIBLE is not French! . . . . . FORWARD! . . . . . MARCH!" Thus, by his undaunted courage, he freed himself and his army from the imminent danger which threatened to crush them.

Needless to say that cowards are easily frightened at the least sign of danger and naturally shrink at the sight of hardship. At the least appearance of any obstacle, they immediately stop and seek safety in a hasty retreat. Surely, we have no ambition to be classed with such men. For "every recreant who proved his timidity in the hour of danger," as Tacitus tersely stigmatizes cowards, "was afterwards boldest in word and tongue."

Remember that persevering labor works wonders, whereas fear engenders only misery and weariness. If we wish to reap in joy, then we should begin to sow in sorrow. Now, God said to Adam, therefore, to the whole human race: *Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy face.* (1) Will we, then, claim exemption from this universal decree? Do we really expect to be the only individuals who will have nothing to suffer and who will be altogether free from annoyance and worry? If so, how will we possibly evade the mandate which Christ gave to all who desire to follow

(1) *Gen., iii, 19.*

Him? *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.* (1) There is no shirking the duty implied in these words, and there can be no subterfuge allowed, for either we have to take up our cross daily, or else desist calling ourselves followers of Christ. Whence it obviously follows that we must renounce ourselves and be prepared to lead a life fraught with trials and tribulations, full of battles and sacrifices. Do we wish to elude them? We undoubtedly refuse to give up our claim to being disciples of Christ, therefore, we should willingly and courageously obey His injunction.

Now, young teachers not infrequently fall into the fatal error of supposing that they and they alone experience hardships in the class. The sooner they rid themselves of this false notion the better for themselves and their pupils. The young teacher should ever remember that difficulties are not peculiar to his calling, but that every art or profession has its particular hardships, apart from the irksome and prolonged apprenticeship common to all. "Whoever is resolved to excel in painting," is the strong utterance of Sir Joshua Reynolds, "or, indeed, in any art, must bring all his mind to bear upon that one object from the moment that he rises until he goes to bed. . . . . Those who are resolved to excel must go to their work, *willing* or *unwilling*, morning, noon, and night; they will find it no play, but *very hard work.*" Does not Horace tell us that life gives nothing to men without great labor? We can readily understand that

(1) *St. Luke, ix, 23.*

no great work is ever accomplished without hard, persistent labor. There are, doubtless, many who, at first, imagined that they could never become successful teachers, but they, nevertheless, reached their goal by generous, persevering efforts. "Labor conquers everything," is the oft-quoted saying of the author of the Aeneid.

We may rest assured, moreover, that our success is always commensurate with the efforts we have exerted to overcome difficulties. Now this being unquestionably true, obstacles and difficulties should encourage rather than discourage the zealous and disinterested young teacher, and afford him even some degree of pleasure in duty well done. Even the pagan Lucretius confidently assures him that "labor is itself a pleasure." Conseqently, if he be constant and energetic, and place his whole confidence in God, he will soon experience the joy in overcoming the last obstacles that encumber his path.

Especially in our own time, when so many new avenues to success have been opened to the energetic and persevering youth, instances of a strong will overriding all obstacles are numerous. Who is not familiar with the early career of President Lincoln? Was his path strewn with roses? The story of his triumphant and honorable advance from peasant obscurity to the highest position of confidence which an appreciative nation could offer him, is a commonplace of history. Most of the men of achievement of our days have been born and bred like Lincoln, in the midst of hardships. Their early days were days of toil and endurance. A heart less stout would have quailed in presence of the

difficulties which they successfully conquered. They were thrown entirely upon their own resources. It seems that nature purposely hedged them round with obstacles and deprived them of the advantages, so lavishly bestowed upon more fortunate competitors, merely to show what an indomitable will can accomplish.

To young men, men of ability and energy, the remark is frequently made by those who have grown gray in the successful pursuit of earthly riches: "At no time have there been so many splendid opportunities offered to the young man ambitious of fortune and distinction." Now shall the class-room, in which the noblest triumphs can be won, where the greatest victories may be gained, be entirely excluded from the field of activity? And are not the prospects of perfect success increased here a hundredfold, when the Christian teacher brings to his work a rational confidence in God, and a courage, begotten of meditation on the dignity of his holy vocation?

But, perhaps the Christian teacher may object to the authorities cited as not sufficiently convincing. Be that as it may, he will certainly not presume to dispute the doctrine of the illustrious Apostle, St. Paul, who has emphatically and confidently declared: *I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me.* (1) *Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.* (2) *And God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will also make*

(1) Phil., iv, 13. (2) II. Cor., xii, 9.

*with the temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it.* (1)

Therefore, when obedience appoints us to a position, let us do the best according to our ability, and promptly banish from our minds all discouraging thoughts as so many dangerous temptations.

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## I.

### THE TEACHER'S DISTRUST IS OFFENSIVE TO GOD.

"Be not too easily discouraged," writes William J. Tilley. (2) "It has been well said that we know what we are, but know not what we may be, and it is much less what we do than what we think which fits us for our future. . . . . But these depressions, these hours of gloom, let us remember, are well-nigh universal; the stoutest-hearted are not exempt. . . . . There are hours of darkness when we go grieving. Will God not enable us to fill out the ragged incompleteness of our lives, which so haunts us evermore? Is He so strong, and will He not remove the bars of sinister circumstances that environ us? Ah, if He only would! Then a sudden light breaks in upon the soul. The whole landscape of life seems lighted up. We see clearly the path which we should take,—the high duties for which we should brace ourselves. Faint not, then, nor falter!"

The Christian teacher should be a man of unfailing courage. Having God with him, why allow diffi-

*(1) I. Cor., x, 13. (2) Masters of the Situation.*

culties to discourage him? The teacher who repines, can not expect the blessings of heaven upon his labors, for, by his want of confidence, he deeply wounds the heart of God. If we put our trust in man, we indeed lean upon a reed; but if in God, then are we truly sustained by the Strong.

"If there be anything which is flattering, as it were, to the Lord," Rodriguez assures us, "and which disposes Him to shower abundantly His graces and favors upon us, it is unquestionably a filial and absolute confidence. Hence there can be nothing more offensive in His sight nor more conducive to provoke His indignation, than our distrust of Him. For this diffidence is before Heaven a direct and cruel affront to His honor. Of the many crimes of Israel, there was no crime that so suddenly inflamed His anger and drew down upon them such terrible and appalling punishments as their want of confidence. Take as instance, the twelve spies whom Moses sent to reconnoitre the land of Canaan. They reported that they had discovered a country dotted with strongly fortified towns and impregnable citadels, whose inhabitants were giants, compared with whom the Israelites were but dwarfs. This account so frightened and terrified the people that they despaired of ever becoming masters of the Promised Land. They even resolved to elect another leader who would conduct them back to Egypt. In vain did Caleb and Josue strive to deter them from executing the project. Their peaceful overtures served only to augment the rage of the people, already panic-stricken, and almost frenzied by fear. Indeed, these infuriated people had

even resolved to stone Caleb and Josue in return for their good offices. Then it was that the glory of the Lord appeared above the Tabernacle, and a voice was heard, saying: *How long will this people detract me? How long will they not believe me for all the signs that I have wrought before them? I will strike them therefore with pestilence, and will consume them.* (1) Nevertheless, Moses, out of goodness of heart, interceded in behalf of his people, and God pardoned them for the sake of His servant. *But all the men that have seen my majesty,* added the Lord, *and the signs that I have done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now ten times, and have not obeyed my voice, shall not see the land for which I swore to their fathers, neither shall any one of them that hath detracted me, behold it.* (2) This severe sentence was rigorously executed. Of the six hundred thousand men who came out of Egypt, there was not one who was permitted to enter the Promised Land, save Caleb and Josue who had earnestly striven to raise the drooping spirit of the people. All that immense multitude were condemned to perish in the desert, in just punishment for their distrust. To manifest more clearly their folly, God said to them: *But your children, of whom you said, that they should be a prey to the enemies, will I bring in: that they may see the land which you have despised.* (3)

"But to illustrate still more strikingly the horror that God has for so cowardly an outrage which wounds Him, as it were, in the tenderest part of His

(1) *Numbers, xiv, 11, 12.*

(2) *Ibid., xiv, 22, 23.* (3) *Ibid., xiv, 31.*

heart, we have merely to place before us the example of Moses and Aaron. In executing an order of the Lord, they were guilty only of a momentary doubt, and yet, they were adjudged deserving of a similar punishment, and deprived of entering the land for which they had so earnestly yearned. In pronouncing their sentence, the Lord said: *Because you have not believed me, to sanctify me before the children of Israel, you shall not bring these people into the land, which I will give them.* (1) As if to emphasize His words, God, from the top of a mountain, shortly afterward pointed out to Moses this promised land, and said to him: *This is the land, for which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying: I will give it to thy seed. Thou hast seen it with thy eyes, and shalt not pass over to it.* (2) Oh! how immeasurably deep, then, is the wound which distrust inflicts on the loving heart of God, since it renders Him so inexorable! It is, verily, a direct affront to His honor, and is, therefore, deservedly visited with such weighty chastisement."

From these reflections we may draw two practical inferences. In the first place, we should hold the discouragement to which we sometimes give way, as due either to the violence of temptation and to the difficulty experienced in the advancement of our spiritual perfection, or else to the trials and hardships endured in our ministry. Hence, we should consider such discouragement as something very reprehensible, not merely in itself, but, likewise, as something supremely insulting to God, and, therefore, as being sovereignly contemptible in His sight. Now, this at-

*(1) Numbers, xx, 12. (2) Deut., xxxiv, 4.*

titude of distrust would seemingly be due to our humility, but, upon closer view, we have to acknowledge that it really has its source in pride. Moreover, we are constrained to admit that it flourishes in our hearts only when we esteem ourselves as self-sufficient, and rely wholly upon our own strength. Whence we draw the second inference, that in all our wants as well as tribulations, our first and principal duty should be to turn toward God and earnestly implore His aid, instead of waiting until we have exhausted all our resources by fruitless efforts. Let us not imitate worldlings who seek success chiefly by human means, and who turn to God only when all their efforts are vain, or when they are confronted by a desperate situation. What is the usual result of such conduct? Naturally, by a just punishment of God, whom they completely ignored in their moments of self-sufficiency, all the resources upon which they had so confidently and boastfully relied and gloried, become suddenly barren, and bring them only utter confusion. Thus we read in the second book of *Paralipomenon: Because,* said the Prophet Asa to the King of Juda, *thou hast had confidence in the King of Syria, and not in the Lord thy God, therefore has the army of the King of Syria escaped out of thy hand.* (1) God is offended when we seek support other than His. Therefore, our first and chief duty is to ask His assistance whenever we are subjected to trials or beset by difficulties. Hence, also the reason why our principal object in meditation should be to establish ourselves firmly in an unshaken confidence in God. For,

(1) *c. xvi, 7.*

is not cultivation of every virtue in our souls the primary end of meditation? Now, would it not be altogether irrational to neglect utilizing so helpful an exercise in the acquisition of so essential a virtue, as implicit and childlike confidence in God?

Moreover, the complete acquisition of this virtue should be the purport of our most unrelenting efforts. We should cultivate it unceasingly, until we feel in our hearts that we have acquired the habit thereof, and thus come naturally to turn always and exclusively toward God, and put our whole trust in Him alone.

We should have the pregnant words of the pious Josaphat, king of Juda, ever on our lips: *O our God, as we know not what to do, we can only turn our eyes to Thee.* (1) If we do this, the Almighty will not only be our strength, but likewise our consolation and joy. Let us proclaim with the Royal Psalmist: *Blessed is the man whose trust is in the name of the Lord, and who hath not regard to vanities, and lying follies.* (2)

Let us always confidently rely upon God in our hour of need; our hope will never suffer disappointment. He Himself will be our helper, and our ministry, blessed by Him, will bring forth abundant fruits of salvation. Then will we, indeed, be ready to exclaim with holy King David: *In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, and my hope has never been confounded, because with my whole heart I sought after Thee.* (3)

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*(1) Paral., xx, 12. (2) Ps., xxxix, 5.*
*(3) Ps., xxx, 2; cxviii, 10.*

## II.

### THOUGHTS HELPFUL TO INSPIRE CONFIDENCE DESPITE APPARENT DIFFICULTIES.

"Learn by my experience," writes St. Theresa, "never to listen to the fears inspired by nature and never lose trust in God's goodness, if He should, on different occasions, call upon you to execute some great design. For if God's glory be your sole object, success is assured, because He is All-powerful."

"Whenever God's greatest glory is the term of our actions," remarks St. Ignatius, "we must be ready to go against wind and wave, and the more desperate the situation, the greater must be our hope in Him."

"I am so positively convinced that it is God's will," said St. Francis Xavier, in speaking of the mission to India, "that were I to delay its execution even for a few instants, I would really deem myself in open war against Heaven. For, then, I would no longer dare hope for Divine Mercy, either in this life or in the life to come. Hence, if I fail to obtain passage on a Portuguese Merchant Vessel, I am fully decided to cast myself into a bark, manned by pagans or even by Saracens. Moreover, I have such unbounded confidence in God, that for His sake alone, I would go thither without a moment's hesitation, and brave, in the frailest vessel, all the tempestous storms of the Ocean. My hopes are centered neither on sails or anchors, nor on sailors, but on God alone. For He is my Pilot, my Anchor of mercy, and salvation."

"In all our troubles, dangers and repugnances," he wrote in another letter, "the sweetest remedy is to fear nothing and to rely confidently on God; whereas the greatest evil that may befall us, in the Lord's battles, is to fear His enemies."

"Now that all seems lost," St. Francis de Sales assures us, "I begin to have confidence."

"Whenever God imposes any difficult undertaking upon us," confidently asserts St. Vincent de Paul, "or permits us to suffer while engaged in His service and promoting His glory, He always, in the order of His Fatherly Providence, defends and aids us."

"Ackowledge that thou canst do nothing without Me," said Our Lord one day to Blessed Margaret Mary. "I shall never allow thee to want for help, provided that thou always keepest thy nothingness and weakness swallowed up in My Strength."

"We are very apt to exaggerate our difficulties," affirms Father Judde; "but we also frequently find that, by applying ourselves manfully, we can accomplish what we, at first, believed impossible. Again, we often feel that our strength increases proportionately to our courage, either because God sustains us, or because many of our troubles are, not infrequently, either purely imaginary, or the result of wounded feelings."

"Rest assured that if God ordain that we should endure hardships," writes that eminent educator, St. John Baptist de la Salle, (1) "after having placed ourselves wholly in His hands to suffer all, when and as long as He pleases, He will invariably aid us by

(1) *Meditation for the Fourth Sunday in Lent.*

His grace to support the trials, causing them, by some unexpected means, even to vanish altogether, and, at a time, we had least expected. King David, having himself experienced the Divine Protection, expressed himself thus: *With expectation I have waited for the Lord, and He was attentive to me. And He heard my prayers, and brought me out of the pit of misery and the mire of dregs. And He set my feet upon a rock, and directed my steps. . . . . Many shall see, and shall fear: And they shall hope in the Lord.*" (1)

How often have we witnessed those who, in the language of the Apostle, (2) against hope believe in hope, realize these consoling promises!

> "Auspicious Hope! in thy sweet garden grow
> Wreaths for each toil, a charm for every woe." (3)

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## III.

### THE CONFIDENCE WHICH A CHRISTIAN TEACHER SHOULD HAVE IN GOD.

> "I thank thee, who hast taught
> My frail mortality to know itself."—*Shakespeare.*

Seldom are we, according to Thomas à Kempis, in the same mood; for to-day we are joyful and to-morrow sorrowful; now glowing with bright hopes, and then repining and given to grieving. Surely, we are, after all, in a sense, creatures of circumstances.

*(1) Ps., xxxix, 2-4. (2) Rom., iv, 18.*
*(3) Campbell, Pleasures of Hope.*

We are subject to sensibility, passions, and imagination. All these varied forces influence the will; sometimes help, at other times oppose, reason; and often get the mastery over the higher powers that should control them. (1) If left to ourselves, we are easily discouraged, perhaps even alarmed. Frequently our alarms are more than our dangers, observes Seneca, and we suffer oftener in apprehension that in fact. Man has need, therefore, in perplexing circumstances, of a sustaining force other than that derived from creatures. It follows that the Christian teacher should draw his strength, not from man or from his own resources, but depend upon God and confide solely in Him. If he so act, the educator will accomplish wonders despite his infirmities, as St. Paul teaches. Let him, therefore, follow the excellent counsel of the Wise Man, who says: *Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not upon thy own prudence.* (2) God will, then, be his strength amid dangers and his comforter in his tribulations. Hence he may also say with Propertius: My last confidence will be like my first. Therefore God is our first, last, and only confidence.

"Do we sincerely desire to follow the teaching of the Wise man," writes Rodriguez, "and know how we can labor effectively for the good of souls? We should be diffident of ourselves, of our own strength, of our own lights, and abilities. We should, moreover, distrust all human means, and place our whole trust in God alone. These are the only means to be employed

*(1) Cf. Natural Law and Legal Practice, René I. Holaind, S. J., pp. 101, 102.*

*(2) Proverbs, iii, 5.*

in the accomplishment of God's work, and they are, at the same time, the surest and most efficacious. These are, likewise, the dispositions so desirable in all those chosen for carrying out such designs, while they are, also, the most essential and most favorable. Ordinarily speaking, it is men, guided by like principles, whom God selects as the instruments of His greatest and most marvelous works.

"St. Augustine, commenting on the eulogy which our Lord passed on Nathanael, when He said of him: *Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile,* (1) observes that a man, worthy of such high commendation, should have been naturally among the first selected for the exalted dignity of the Apostolate. And, nevertheless, such was not the fact, and why? It was, explains this Father of the Church, because Nathanael was a man of great learning and a profound doctor, and, according to our Lord's design, as St. Paul teaches, the preaching of the Gospel and the conversion of souls were to be accomplished and effected, not by doctors and men of knowledge, but by obscure and rude fishermen, who were as ignorant as they were unknown.

"David, while in pursuit of his enemies, the Amalecites, who had smitten and burned Siceleg, and had taken the inhabitants captives, found an unfortunate man lying, half-dead, in a field. He chanced to be an Egyptian slave who, owing to his weakened state, was abandoned by his Amalecite master to die by the road-side. David took care of him and gave him strengthening nourishment. The man's strength

(1) *St. John, i, 47.*

being restored, David took him as a guide; and thus was enabled to come upon the enemy, and surprise them, at the very time, when they, feeling confident of their security from pursuit, had given themselves up to the pleasures of feasting. David vigorously attacked them, vanquished them, and recovered all the spoils that had been taken. David, says St. Gregory, is here a figure of Jesus Christ. Like the son of Isai, the Son of God, the true David, called into His service those whom the world had ignored. He fortified them with His saving word, and appointed them His guides, to march against the Amalecites, the preachers of His Gospel against a world entirely devoted to joys and pleasures.

"Now, why is it that God takes such predilection in selecting weak instruments for His greatest projects? Simply to render it absolutely impossible for man to depend upon his own strength or to attribute to himself any good whatsoever; to teach him that he should place his whole trust in God and refer to Him the glory of all things. This disposition is most acceptable to God, and to imprint this truth more deeply on our hearts, He takes great delight in bringing about the grandest results through the instrumentality of the weakest agents. He does this to make more manifest that it is He alone who acts, and not His creature, *that He might show the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He has prepared unto glory.*" (1)

Let us draw, then, with Rodriguez, the three following conclusions: 1.—Not to be discouraged at the

(1) *Rom., ix, 23.*

sight of our own weakness; 2.—To give to God the glory of our success; 3.—To do our best and leave the success of our efforts to God.

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## IV.

### THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR INABILITY SHOULD NOT DISHEARTEN US.

While frankly acknowledging our utter inability and fully realizing the immense disproportion of our talents, when contrasted with the greatness of the end we have to attain and the sublimity of the ministry to which we are called, we ought to be exceedingly prudent and cautious not to allow ourselves to grow disheartened. This very knowledge of self should, however, be to us rather an additional motive of confidence, and should, moreover, induce us to rely wholly upon Him who delights in manifesting His power by choosing the meanest instruments in the accomplishment of His most stupendous works.

The answer which St. Francis of Assisi made to a query of Masseo, one of his religious brethren, breathes this charming spirit. The disciple thoroughly understood his master's great love for humiliation, and, therefore, resolved to put it to a severe test.

Accordingly, he one day said to St. Francis: "It is well known that you are of humble birth, that your knowledge is but mediocre, and you certainly can not boast of a very comely appearance. Can you, then, explain to me how it is that everybody, nevertheless,

is running after you, displaying such eagerness, either to see or hear you?" "That you should seem astonished," replied the Saint, "is very evident and rightly so. But the reason therefor, my Brother, is quite simple. God in His infinite goodness has deigned to regard me, although I am the vilest sinner, and most contemptible creature, on earth; for remember *the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise, and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong, and the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen, and things that are not, that He might bring to nought things that are that no flesh should glory in His sight. He that glorieth, may glory in the Lord to whom be honor and glory, forever and ever. Amen."* (1)

May this admirable answer be deeply engraved on our hearts for our consolation and encouragement.

"O be very sure
That no man will learn anything at all,
Unless he first will learn humility." (2)

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## V.

### TO GOD MUST BE ATTRIBUTED THE GLORY OF OUR SUCCESS.

"Acquaint thyself with God, if thou would'st taste
His works. Admitted once in His embrace,
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before:
Thine eyes shall be instructed; thine heart
Made pure shall relish, with divine delight
Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought."

—*Cowper.*

(1) *I. Cor., i, 27, 28, 29, 31; Rom., xvi, 27.*
(2) Owen Meredith, *Vanini.*

Whatever good we may effect among souls, or whatever brilliant results may crown our achievements, though bordering even on the miraculous, we should never allow them to become to us a cause of pride. They should rather induce us to clothe ourselves with our infirmities and nothingness, as if we had really accomplished nothing, since in reality we are nothing and can do nothing of ourselves. Therefore, whatever we may be or do, it is only as instruments in God's powerful hand. The Royal Prophet was deeply sensible of this truth, and he strongly expressed his conviction thus: *We have heard, O God, with our ears: our fathers have declared to us the work Thou hast wrought in their days, and in the days of old. Thy hand destroyed the Gentiles, and Thou plantedst them: Thou didst afflict the people and cast them out. For they got not the possession of the land by their own sword; neither did their own arm save them. But Thy right hand and Thy arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou wast pleased with them.*[1] The honor of serving Thee was not due to any merit of our own, nor did we possess any right or title thereto, save that which Thou wast pleased to confer upon us by a special and gratuitous gift.

Consequently, whenever, in the order of God's benign Providence, He wishes to operate any great things through our feeble instrumentality, we should not permit ourselves to be puffed up. On the contrary, this should rather have the tendency to make us more humble by reason of the greatness of the

(1) *Ps. xliii, 2-4.*

work for which we have become His unworthy agents. We should enter thoughtfully into the wonderful designs of His wisdom, and should be confidently assured that, what has happened, was only in accordance with His inscrutable designs of accomplishing the most marvelous effects through the agency of such very insignificant causes.

Let us emulate St. Peter's humility after he had taken the miraculous draught of fishes. Our Lord, having commanded him to cast his net into the sea: *Master,* said he, *we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing: but at Thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes, and their net broke. And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking. Which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus's feet, saying: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of fishes which they had taken.* (1) When St. Peter amazingly beheld the miraculous draught of fishes which he, after wasting a whole night in fruitless labor, had taken at the Lord's command, he was so overpowered at the effect of that one word, that he could hardly find language expressive of the deep sense of his own nothingness.

Consequently, whenever God is pleased to associate us with Himself, as it were, in the great works which He is pleased to accomplish, we, too, should

(1) *St. Luke, v, 5-9.*

be animated with like feelings of profound humility and confusion. How altogether foreign to St. Peter's mind were any thoughts of pride or vanity, as he contemplated that astonishing draught of fishes! How far removed from us, then, should be any idea of self-complacency in the subject-matter of God's designs, in which He so singularly honors us by seeking our co-operation! How strikingly does He manifest, in all splendor, the depth of His wisdom and the greatness of His power, in the selection of nothingness as His special agents! Hence, following St. Peter's example, let us be wholly diffident of ourselves and hope all from God, claiming nothing for ourselves in all things, save infirmity and misery as being our sole inheritance. Let us refer all the honor and glory to God to whom alone they rightfully belong.

Contemplate, again, the result of St. Peter's labors, casting his net into the sea at his own volition and pleasure, and deduce therefrom the fruitful lesson that we can expect nothing so long as we depend upon our own efforts, wisdom, and self-sufficiency. And, then, reflect on the wonderful difference of the result when he casts his net at the command of the Lord, and strive to understand that similarly all our hopes must be confidently founded only on God's grace and assistance. Now, if our diffidence of self were, in a manner to augment immeasurably, then would our trust in God likewise proportionately increase, and we would thus draw the twofold and inappreciable advantage of being saved, not from presumption only, but also from discouragement.

## VI.

### TO DO THE BEST ACCORDING TO OUR ABILITY AND LEAVE RESULTS TO GOD.

Now, if it be true that we should distrust self, and not depend upon our own strength, then it is equally certain, that we should, in the interest of our neighbor's salvation, exercise all our innate talents to their utmost capacity, and avail ourselves of all the resources at our command. But to expect that God should condescend to do everything, while we would be content to play the part of idle spectators, would be not only to ask Him to perform miracles, but also to tempt Him. The work of saving souls must undoubtedly be attributed to God, but, in accordance with a law of His infinite wisdom, He desires, as St. Paul teaches, our co-operation therein, *as the ministers and dispensers of His mysteries.* (1)

Our Lord did not intend that St. Peter should take the immense draught of fishes without some participation therein. Accordingly, He ordered St. Peter to cast the nets, to teach us, that we, too, should not be wholly idle or passive. He desired, moreover, to forewarn us against the possible temptation of attributing the conversion of souls to our own individual efforts and talents, and hence the purport of allowing St. Peter to waste a night in useless labor, without achieving any success. Whence it follows, that we should avail ourselves of whatever our own strength can do, or what our own knowledge

*(1) I. Cor., iv, 1.*

and ability may suggest, as though the success of the undertaking depended solely on our individual resources. At the same time, we have positively no more guarantee of its success, as a result of such personal efforts, than if we had really accomplished nothing, since our sole hope must absolutely repose in God alone. For *when you have done all things,* we read in St. Luke, *that are commanded you say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do.* (1) Now let us note carefully that our Lord does not say: When we shall have done *some of the things* that have been commanded us, but when we shall have done *all* that has been commanded us, with the express intention that this truth may be the more deeply imprinted on our minds. He desired also to emphasize the fact that our confidence should rest exclusively in God, and, moreover, that all the glory should be referred to Him alone. To act thus, is, according to the positive teaching of the Saints, conducive to the practice of the highest degree of humility.

After St. Peter and St. John had cured the cripple who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, the people were seized with great awe and admiration of them, which St. Peter perceiving, thus addressed the multitude: *Ye men of Israel, why wonder you at this? or why look you upon us, as if by our strength or power we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our Fathers, hath glorified His son* JESUS, *whom you indeed delivered up and denied before the face of Pilate, when he judged He*

(1) *c. xvii, 10.*

*should be released. And in the faith of His name, the man whom you have seen and known, hath his name strengthened; and the faith which by him, hath given this perfect soundness in the sight of you all.* (1)

St. Paul and St. Barnabas had wrought a similar miracle at Lystra. Here also the people, seeing what was done, took them for gods come down upon earth in the likeness of men, and were busily preparing victims for the holocaust, and crowns which they intended for the Apostles. These, however, divining their intention, ran before the multitude, rending their garments, exclaiming: *Ye men, why do you these things? We also are mortals, men like unto you.* (2) It is not we who have done this, but God whose feeble instruments we are. To Him alone, therefore, belongs the glory of the wonder you have witnessed and now so admire, as does also the glory of all things.

Thus, did these saints maintain themselves in the spirit of humility, even in presence of the mighty works which God had operated through them, as if they had been complete strangers in their accomplishment. Thus should, likewise, be our conduct, seeking ever to clothe ourselves in the sense of our infirmity and nothingness, notwithstanding all that we have done or may have effected in the service of souls.

For,

> "God never meant that man should scale the heavens
> By strides of human wisdom. In His works,
> Though wondrous, He commands us in His word
> To seek Him rather where His mercy shines." (3)

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*(1) Acts, iii, 12, 13, 16, (2) Ibid., xiv, 14.*
*(3)* Cowper, *The Task, Bk. III.*

## VII.

### CONFIDENCE IN GOD, AN EXCELLENT MEANS TO OBTAIN GREAT FAVORS.

There is perhaps no truth that forces itself more upon an observer of human nature, than the universal impotency noticeable in individual characters. No one is sufficient for himself. Hence, we all are naturally dependent and as naturally seek strength and aid from others. But since man is frail by nature, it follows that he will often fail us in our critical moments. Consequently, it is rational that we turn towards Him, who is the source of all strength and place all our hope there. God, therefore, becomes our centre of hope, whence shall radiate the many graces requisite for us in the varying, trying circumstances under which we will find ourselves in life.

If we confide in Him, He Himself asures us of His aid and protection. We read in *Deuteronomy*: *Every place, that your foot shall tread on, shall be yours.* (1) Now, "by the term foot," according to St. Cyprian, "we are to understand that hope which obtains all its desires." "Do not fear to give wings to your hope," St. Bernard assures us; "for whatever it obtains, shall be yours, and if you hope much from God, rest assured that He will be generous; whereas, if you *expect little, He will do little.*"

The Gospel is replete with facts that are in evidence of this truth. Listen, for instance, to the words which Jarius, one of the rulers of the synagogue, whom

(1) *Deut., xi, 24.*

death had robbed of his daughter, addressed to Jesus: *Lord, my daughter is even now dead; but come, lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live.* (1) Although possessing both faith and confidence, and believing Jesus had the power of restoring his daughter to life, the ruler's faith and confidence were nevertheless not altogether perfect. He presumed it necessary to her resuscitation, that our Lord should come to the house and lay His hand upon the girl. The Saviour, accommodating Himself to the measure of the ruler's faith, condescendingly accompanied him to the house, came near the dead girl, took her by the hand and raised her to life.

Again, observe the woman who had been afflicted for twelve long years with a troublesome disease, which had defied all the skill of the physicians whom she had consulted. She, therefore, follows the multitude who press after Jesus, saying within herself: *If I shall touch only His garment, I shall be healed* (2). Undismayed at the frequent repulses she had unavoidably encountered, she, at last, succeeded in approaching the Saviour, and had barely touched the hem of His garment, when she felt herself cured of her malady. Hers was, indeed, perfect faith, but she was still wanting in absolute confidence. Nevertheless, her faith and confidence had fully attained their object within the limits she had prescribed.

Thus far, we have been considering instances of faith whose quality was not entirely perfect. The Evangelist St. Matthew, however, relates a charming example of perfect faith in all its plenitude; yes,

*(1) St. Matt., ix, 18. (2) St. Matt., ix, 21.*

a faith that is altogether free from doubt and restriction; a faith, moreover, which recognizes in God's power, neither conditions nor limitations other than those of His own will. This beautiful model of faith and confidence in God is no other than the Roman centurion who asks Jesus for the cure of a servant. Notice carefully that the centurion does not request our Lord to come to his house, nor the favor of allowing the sick servant to touch the hem of the garment, but simply declares: *Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed.* This faith was so admirable, that our Lord marvelled thereat, and said to those surrounding Him: *Amen I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel;* and to the centurion: *Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee.* (1) This roman soldier, having unbounded confidence in Christ's power, firmly believed that one word sufficed to effect the cure of his servant. The word was spoken, and, accordingly, the servant was healed. Thus God delights to act, whenever we give evidence of a like unlimited confidence in Him. *Let Thy mercy, O Lord,* implores the Psalmist, *be upon us, as we have hoped in Thee.* (2) The more our soul is dilated by confidence, says St. Cyprian, the more God is pleased to pour abundantly into it the celestial waters of His saving grace.

Again, St. Peter walks upon the water at the command of his Divine Master. Now, observe this incident, that St. Peter, so long as his faith does not grow weak, walks as firmly upon the water as if he were

*(1) St. Matt., viii, 8, 13. (2) Ps., xxxii, 22.*

on land; whereas, from the very instant his faith fails him, by reason of the strong wind and waves, so also from that moment does the sea give way from under him, yawning to engulph him. Our Lord, in answer to St. Peter's entreating cry for help, tenderly reproaches him: *O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* (1) As if He had said: You sink only because of your want of confidence. Alas! how often could not God have addressed a similar reproach to us, when, being overwhelmed by trials and temptations, we deemed resistance to the threatened storm as impossible or our condemnation to ruin as inevitable! For the peril which affrights us, consists rather in our conception of it, than in the fear itself, or perhaps in the weakness of our hearts, where hope really wavers. But a firm confidence in the goodness and power of God, would evidently be inviting His aid, and, in a manner, lovingly compelling Him to withdraw us from danger and shower upon us His choicest graces.

The Moabites and Ammonites had united their strength against the common foe, King Josaphat of Juda. This prince was seized with a great fear, for he was well aware, that his army was too feble to cope with such a formidable opposition. But neither he nor his subjects lost, in this their perplexing crisis, all hope, but, confidently turning to God, they earnestly entreated and implored the Lord of hosts, to strengthen them by His all-powerful arm. In answer to their fervent supplications, God signified His approval by sending them Jahaziel, who delivered to

(1) *St. Matt., xiv, 31.*

them this prophetic message from the Lord: *Fear ye not, and be not dismayed at this multitude: for the battle is not yours, but God's. . . . . It shall not be you,* continues the prophet, *that shall fight, but only stand with confidence, and you shall see the help of the Lord over you.* (1) The promised succor was not delayed. For, on the following morning, when Juda came to the watch tower, they saw, lying in the vast plain before them, the dead bodies of their enemy, who had mutually turned their arms against one another, thus destroying one another, that not one was left who had escaped death.

This incident clearly emphasizes the fact, how little it is that God really demands of us to accord us His protection and aid against our enemy, and to award us the crown of victory. His sole condition is that we put our unwavering trust in Him. Do we still entertain any doubt? Listen, then, to the reason which God Himself assigns, for promising His assistance to those who are exposed to temptations, and subject to tribulations, but who, nevertheless, confidingly hope in Him: *Because he hoped in Me,* said the Lord, *I will deliver him. I will protect him because he hath known My Name.* (2)

O ravishing liberality of God! exclaims St. Bernard. O admirable goodness which never fails those who place their trust in it! For, *in Thee have our fathers hoped,* proclaims the Royal Psalmist; *they have hoped, and Thou hast delivered them. . . . . They have trusted in Thee, and were not confounded* (3). *. . . . My children, behold the genera-*

(1) II. Paral., xx, 15 & 17. (2) Ps., xc, 14. (3) Ps., xxi, 5 & 6.

*tions of men: and know ye that no one hath hoped in the Lord, and hath been confounded. . . . . Who hath called upon Him, and He despised him?* (1)

Now, why does God deal so generously with those who thus place all their hope in Him? It is because as we become diffident of our strength and centre all our hope in God, expecting nothing save from Him, we simply refer everything to Him. We divest ourselves, as it were, of all responsibility concerning the work, wherein God's honor and glory are involved, and we place Him under a kind of obligation to assure its success. The conversion of souls is Thy concern, O Lord, and not ours; for of what avail are all our efforts in presence of a work so far transcending all human strength and wisdom? What power could we possibly have, either to touch or change hearts, nay, in a manner, re-create them? Thou knowest, O Lord, that it is a work which can be effected only by Thy Almighty power! Accomplish, then, Thy work and lend Thy co-operating hand thereto, which is peculiarly and singularly Thine by a special predilection!

Again, if Josue formerly had just cause for humbling himself to the dust, that he might succeed in averting God's anger from the people of Israel, then, we have undoubtedly far more weighty reasons to humble ourselves, and to say: "Overwhelm us, O Lord, with shame and confusion, and deliver us up in due time to our enemy; for, we have richly deserved this fate by our many and frequent prevarications. But what shall become of the glory of Thy

(1) *Eccli., ii, 11 & 12.*

Name? What shall be the judgment of the nations, when they shall witness the destruction and captivity of Thy people? They will assuredly declare that Thou hadst not the power to lead them into the land which Thou hadst promised them." Let us humbly say with King David: *Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to thy name give glory;* (1) and let us equally admit with the prophet Baruch: *To us confusion of face, but to the Lord belongeth justice.* (2)

Whence we may rightly infer that, from whatever point of view we examine this important subject-matter, it is palpably evident that the most efficacious means of obtaining God's grace and blessing, consists in an unwavering, absolute confidence in His unbounded, infinite goodness. Let us be consoled by the assurance of the Psalmist: *The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him: and in them that hope in His mercy.* (3)

Now, if men generally should have an abiding trust in God, then, for a stronger reason, should the Christian teacher, above all others, be distinguished by this unbounded confidence. Engaged, as he necessarily is, in the various functions of his high calling, he should be cautious not to undertake any task, nor take a single step, nor do anything whatsoever, unless sanctioned or prescribed by obedience, and that at all times and under all circumstances. This must be his normal, undeviating line of conduct, for, in such prescriptions, he will find a definite course, together with all the necessary means, principles, and well-established methods, to attain the glorious end of his exalted ministry.

*(1) Ps., cxiii, 9. (2) c. II, 6. (3) Ps. cxlvi, 11.*

When Moses was commanded to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land, God did not leave him altogether to his own resources, but gave him ample instructions, descending even to the minutest details respecting his office and everything pertaining thereto. We notice that the Lord ordered this great leader of his people to construct the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, the propitiatory, and the table of the loaves of proposition, as well as the vessels destined for the service of the tabernacle. And not only did God command their construction, but He even gave precise instructions concerning the measure and the proportion of everything to be made. Moreover, Holy Scripture explicitly informs us that God did not rest there. To assure Himself, as it were, that even the minutest details would be strictly carried out, He called by name Beseleel, associating with him Ooliab, and filled them with His spirit, with wisdom and understanding and knowledge in all manner of work, to devise whatever may be artificially made of gold and silver and brass, of marble and precious stones, and a variety of wood. (1)

If God so generously endowed the special workmen whom He had appointed to construct the material tabernacle and all its appurtenances, what may not Christian teachers expect? Are they not also laborers of predilection, selected from among so many millions, to work at the spiritual tabernacle of souls, at the living temple of the Holy Spirit, and establish the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men? We have, then, every reason for hoping, that, in the measure in

*(1) Cf. Exodus, xxxi, 1-7.*

which spiritual things exceed material, so is God still more willing to bestow, in abundance, upon us the graces requisite for the worthy and efficacious accomplishment of the duties of our sublime ministry.

Let us then be full of courage and confidence; let us banish from our minds this pernicious, baneful thought: *Success is impossible, owing to the great difficulties of the class.* Let us do well, what we can; trust in God, and we will, in due season, receive all the aid that our arduous task will demand.

Yield to God, by wisdom and courage.

"O how humbly and lowly ought I to think of myself," says Thomas à Kempis; "how little ought I to esteem whatever good I may seem to have.

"O! how low ought I to cast myself down under the bottomless depths of Thy judgments, O Lord, where I find myself to be *nothing* else but *nothing!*

"How can I be puffed up with the vain talk of men, whose heart in *truth* is subjected to God?

"All the world will not move him whom *truth* hath established in humility.

"Neither will he be moved with the tongues of all that praise him, who hath settled his whole hope in God." (1)

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*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III., C. XIV., 3, 4.*

## SIXTH OBJECTION.

### LACK OF KNOWLEDGE MILITATES AGAINST SUCCESS.

"For all men the law of work is plain;
It gives them food, strength, knowledge, vict'ry, peace;
It makes joy possible, and lessens pain;
From passion's lawless power it wins release,
Confirms the heart, and widens reason's reign,
Makes man like God, whose work can never cease."

—*Bishop Spalding.*

Teaching is essentially an intellectual work. It brings into action the whole man. It calls into exercise all the powers of the soul, all the faculties of the intellect, and all the qualities of the heart. Therefore, it demands that he who rightly estimates its true greatness and realizes its far-reaching effects, must needs possess qualities and abilities of a high order, and a mind that is matured and developed, or, at least, is capable of fair development, of culture and refinement. All right-thinking men admit that the teacher plays an important rôle, for he is entrusted with the instruction and education of the rising generation, the future men and women of the nation. Hence it is of primary importance that the Christian teacher be a man of strong character and of unquestionable moral worth. For, "what the teacher *is*, not what he utters and inculcates, is the important thing," according to the strong language of Bishop Spalding. "The life he lives, and whatever reveals that to his pupils; his unconscious behavior even; above all, what in his inmost soul he hopes, believes, and loves,

have far deeper and more influence than mere lessons can ever have." It is obvious, then, that "the true educator," he tells us elsewhere, "*even in giving technical instruction*, strives not merely to make a workman, but to *make* also a *man*, whose being shall be touched to finer issues by spiritual powers, who shall be upheld by faith in the *worth and sacredness of life*, and in the education by it is *transformed, enriched, purified, and ennobled.*"

Now, this presumes that the Christian teacher, in particular, be a man of attainments, knowledge, experience, and, above all, a man of great virtue. The very first requirement of any workman is a thorough knowledge of the various implements used in his particular art or trade. To acquire this he passes long years of apprenticeship. Thus he obtains both knowledge and experience. Consequently, the Christian teacher must needs be a student in the strictest sense of the term. He should not remain content with what he may have already acquired through preliminary training, but should ever drink deep at the running stream of knowledge, and at its very source.

Aristotle wrote, in the beginning of his treatise on Metaphysics, that all men naturally desire to know; they have always a strong inclination to learn something new. Thus we see that by a law of our intellect, we are impelled to study, to seek knowledge, and the Christian teacher should be the very last to claim an exemption. But he must not have an exaggerated idea of the knowledge required of him before he undertake the work of instruction.

It is quite clear, that all men are not equally gifted, and that every teacher is not a genius, neither is it essential to his ministry. Withal, he has an intellect capable of development and culture. Now, it is equally obvious that he can not know everything, for the simple reason that we are, by nature, finite, therefore, limited in our mental operations and activity. But we are, also, fully aware that there is nothing to prevent the cultivation of our intellect, if there exist the strong and determined will to use the means. For, in mind as in matter, there is no field however sterile that may not be rendered fertile by due and careful cultivation. Cicero was unquestionably a student, and yet he admits that he could not grasp everything, and thus frankly avows it: "I am not ashamed, as some are, to confess my ignorance of what I do not know." "It is nothing," says the thoughtful Marquis de Vauvenargues, "to be ignorant of many things, if at the same time we *are capable of receiving them,* and all that is *wanting is to learn them.*" (1)

This presupposes that we have made the necessary efforts to acquire knowledge with all due diligence. There never was a genius, no matter how universal, who was wholly free from all leaven of ignorance. The industrious and painstaking scholar may rightly affirm with Locke that a man may live long, and die at last in ignorance of many truths, which his mind was capable of knowing, and that with certainty.

All that we have said must not be considered a pal-

(1) Introduction à la connaissance de l'esprit humain.

liation of ignorance, but rather as an encouragement to the young teacher who thinks that he should know at twenty what, with every effort, he may scarcely attain at three score and ten. But

> "There is no remedy for time misspent;
> No healing for the waste of idleness,
> Whose very languor is a punishment
> Heavier than active souls can feel or guess." (1)

Surely, no Christian teacher to-day can be found who is not positively convinced of the necessity of acquiring knowledge and much knowledge. But how to attain it is frequently a perplexing question to young teachers, or for that matter, to all of us. Remember, then, method is the first essential. Desultory reading and study have never yet made a scholar. After having gone through a good course of studies, the student will have learned his special aptitudes and talents. It is needless to say that no two tastes are exactly alike, and, therefore, much rests with the student to make himself "a full man," as Bacon expresses it. But the moment that he has ascertained the bent of his mind, then it is incumbent upon him to draw up a course of studies, correlating all secondary branches to the primary one, and to pursue it with unrelenting vigor and perseverance. He should be careful to master the principles, and accept nothing, unless the demonstrations are clear, positive, and supported by solid facts and arguments. Never trust second-hand authority, but invariably go to the very sources. Never glide over difficulties, but throw the whole soul into the work until it is thoroughly mas-

(1) Aubrey de Vere, *A Song of Faith.*

tered. Concentration of mind is a necessary quality, for without it we study in vain. Indeed, there is no scholarship possible without it. Learn, above all, to think.

Brother Azarias [1] states very positively that "to learn how to learn and to learn how to think, this is the sum of all education." He lays down the following concise method: "Accustom yourself to the habit of weighing carefully all you read or hear. Be not carried away by every novelty. Learn to sift the chaff from the grain. Remember that he is not the most learned man who has read the greatest number of books. Only in proportion as you digest and assimilate to your thoughts what you read do you acquire genuine knowledge." [2] Bishop Spalding confirms this method, when he asserts that "right thinking, like right doing, is the result of innumerable efforts, innumerable failures, the final outcome of which is a habit of right thought and conduct." Follow likewise his excellent advice: "Strive not to be original or profound, but to think justly and to express clearly what you see; and so it may happen that your view shall pierce deeper than you know."

Nevertheless, in all his endeavors to cultivate his own mind and to foster habits of attentive study in his pupils, the Christian teacher must take care lest the too close and constant attention to the higher pursuit of knowledge chill the heart. For, not only should he exercise all the faculties of the intellect, but

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*(1) Psychology of Education.*
*(2) Phases of Thought and Criticism.*

he should specially cherish those endearing, ennobling qualities of the heart. If he would exercise any influence over his pupils, the young Christian teacher should never forget that it is through the heart this is obtained rather than by an appeal to their intellects. He must likewise bear in mind that such influence is strengthened by those qualities of his own spiritual nature which come to the knowledge of his pupil. It is beyond dispute that mind influences mind. But the power which the Christian teacher exerts over the minds of pupils is never so lasting as that exercised over the heart. Herein, then, lies the power and permanency, as well as the excellency of his ministry; at least, it is to the heart of children that he should direct his special attention. Vauvenargues seemed to have recognized this, for he said that the greatest thoughts come from the heart. (1) Again, he was anxious to console teachers who were not remarkable for great learning, for he was quite soothing when stating that "one should console himself for not possessing great talent, as he would console himself for not occupying a distinguished position; for through the heart, one rises above both the one and the other." (2) De Maistre expresses a similar thought: "The same with truth that man can not grasp, save with the intelligence of the heart." The learned and cultured Bishop Spalding has this beautiful thought on the same subject: (3) "Knowledge, like religion, leads us away from what appears to what is, from what passes to what re-

*(1) Introduction à la connaissance de l'esprit humain.*
*(2) Ibid. (3) Means and Ends of Education.*

mains, from what flatters the senses to that which *speaks to the soul.* Wisdom and religion converge, as love and knowledge meet in God; and to the wise as to the religious man, no great evil can happen."

Thus it is that the Christian teacher becomes a moral power, influencing and developing the character of his pupils. After all, if the children's character be not formed, that is, if the will be not educated, it ceases to be education and becomes a failure. Nay more, it is apt to ruin the child. For only when the pupil is spiritually strengthened and fortified to enable him to meet the temptations of life, can it be said that he is properly educated. Consequently, with an educated will and an enlightened mind, the pupil goes forth like a young giant, feeling within himself a power to do what is right and willing to do it. He is then a strong man, according to Bishop Spalding, for he knows how and is able to become and be himself; the magnanimous man is he who being strong, knows how and is able to issue forth from himself, as from a fortress, to guide, protect, encourage, and save others. Furthermore, he will fully realize that "the end of man is the pursuit of perfection, through communion with God, his fellows, and nature, by means of knowledge and conduct, of faith, admiration, and love." The teacher who can accomplish such results, however mediocre his talents and limited his knowledge, may justly claim the crown of victory. While knowledge would immeasurably aid him, the Christian teacher who is full of the spirit of God, a man of prayer, has a weapon which is often denied more learned and cultured teachers.

This should stimulate him to acquire still greater knowledge, and instead of "going to grieving," he should be encouraged and strengthened.

Even when the powerful succor of Divine grace is added to his well-planned and intelligent efforts, the Christian teacher should be on his guard against another insidious foe. This is hesitation, a lack of energy, a disgust for his work which will occasionally creep in and tend to defeat all the resolves made in the time of fervor. It is then that such teachers who assign lack of knowledge as the cause of their ill success, generally fail. They may see their course, the way is plain; and still they stand by and allow the opportunity of acquiring the necessary knowledge to escape them. Now, the only remedy for these hesitating teachers is to plunge in and do the best they can. This is, likewise, the counsel of Sydney Smith. Delays are dangerous, for they neutralize, if they do not altogether paralyze, our best purposes. If we mean to become successful teachers and to do our work intelligently, then we must seize every favorable moment that may chance to present itself. "The difference between him who succeeds and him who fails," observes a thinker, "is that the one promptly and resolutely conquers the dread, while the other allows himself to be conquered by it." We can all labor, and persevering, persistent labor and resolve will remove all possibility of failure.

Knowledge is within the reach of all. Application conquers all obstacles. Enter into the work with enthusiasm and there is nothing that can withstand it. Enthusiasm makes itself felt and changes

the whole complexion of a class. What the teacher has, that he can impart, but let him do this with enthusiasm. Bishop Spalding expresses this truth admirably, when he tells us that "the teacher makes the school; and when high, noble, pure, devout, and enlightened men educate, the conditions favorable to mental and moral growth will be found." "Many a man has looked his soul into the face," writes Tilley, (1) "and distrusting his own powers has ignobly given up the whole battle in despair, and made a failure of life, when success was right at hand. A treacherous self-consciousness was no doubt at the bottom of it. Let no man forget himself and how he is working altogether, if he would succeed." Constantly bear in mind these significant words of a certain writer: "Knowledge is not only the source of our highest and purest joys, but without it we can attain neither moral nor material good in the noblest forms." To this we may add the weighty authority of St. Thomas Aquinas: "Much avails human study, when a man carefully, *frequently, reverently* applies his mind to the testimony of his ancestors, *not neglecting it* through *indolence,* or *despising it* through *pride.*"(2)

But "not only is there an art in knowing, but also a certain art in teaching," according to the correct judgment of Cicero. The experienced teacher has acquired this secret only after many trials, or even perhaps after many failures. We have an old adage which says that "experience by suffering is

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*(1) Masters of the Situation.*
*(2) Sum., ii, 2., q. 49, a, 3.*

instructive." Hardships of this kind however become meritorious and his labor will eventually be productive of fruit, if the true Christian teacher be actuated by high aims and ennobling principles. These guiding motives will also enable him to appreciate the fact that in his teaching not only is the child concerned, but society likewise. For through children the regeneration of society can most happily be effected. This truth is beyond cavil. When the Christian teacher is a man of high, noble aspirations, purified by faith, strengthened by hope, and enlightened by love, what human heart can withstand his power or influence? It is simply irresistible. Being possessed, then, of these high aims and noble aspirations, is it not quite natural that the teacher inspire the pupils with similar ones? Assuredly, for "it is the educator's business to cherish the aspirations of the young, to inspire them with confidence in themselves, and to make them feel and understand that *no labor can be too good or too long,* if its result be cultivation and enlightenment of mind. For them ideals are real; their life is as yet wrapped in the bud; and to encourage them to believe that if they are but true to themselves, the flower and fruit will be fair and health-bringing, is to open for them the fountain of hope and noble endeavor." Moreover, he teaches to good purpose, elsewhere observes Bishop Spalding, who inspires the love of excellence, and who sends his pupils forth from the school's narrow walls with such desire for self-improvement that the whole world becomes to them a God-appointed university.

Although the ideal herein established may be high, it is certainly not beyond the possibility of the true Christian teacher who is actuated by disinterested motives, and guided by that lively spirit of faith, that most essential quality in this all-important work, namely, the cultivation of the will and heart of the pupils. Consequently, the teacher must neglect nothing to prepare himself for these high functions. The greater the knowledge, the greater will be the efficiency.

Bear in mind, however, that Paul may plant, Apollo water, but God alone can give the increase. Hence, no matter how brilliant or profound a teacher may be, he can fulfill only a part of his ministry, unless he be actuated by supernatural motives. Thus it may happen that a teacher, not so gifted in natural talents by the Creator, may accomplish more successfully the end of his mission, than one more richly endowed. His success may rightly be attributed to the purity of intention and of faith.

Every teacher should emulate the example of St. John Berchmans, who always had before him the following sentences on his desk: "If men of the world spend long years in mastering human sciences, through self-love and vain-glory, shall I not apply myself to their acquisition for God's glory? Therefore, devote yourself seriously and earnestly to your studies, and be especially careful not to lose a single moment of a time so precious. Note everything that may impress or strike you as useful and interesting. For to labor to instruct yourself that thus you may glorify God the better and labor to greater advantage in the saving of souls, is a work of great merit."

This, then, should be the secret motive-power of every Christian teacher, for it gives him an influence far exceeding that springing from mere knowledge alone. Never forget that knowledge united to solid piety, virtue, and a habit of faith, constitutes a perfect teacher, at least humanly speaking. This is also the class of teachers which the present condition of society and state of intellectual progress and civilization imperatively demand. This is the class of teachers that can most efficiently further the interests of the Church, and cause religion to be esteemed and honored, and thereby induce man to follow the saving doctrines of Christ.

To leave no room, therefore, for any possible doubt as to the kind of teachers which the age and the Church need, the eloquent words of Bishop Spalding are subjoined: "We need men whose intellectual view embraces the history of the race, who are familiar with literature, who have studied all social movements, who are acquainted with the development of philosophic thought, who are not blinded by physical miracles and industrial wonders, but who know how to appreciate all truth, all beauty, all goodness. And to this wide culture they must join the earnestness, the confidence, the charity, and the purity of motive which Christian faith inspires. We need scholars who are saints, and saints who are scholars. We need men of genius who live for God and their country; men of action who seek light in the company of those who know; men of religion who understand that God reveals himself in science, and works in Nature as in the souls of men, for the good of those

who love Him. Let us know the right moment, and let us know that it comes for those alone who are prepared."

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## I.

### TRUE WISDOM SUPERIOR TO MERE KNOWLEDGE.

The father of scholastic philosophy, St. Anselm, affirmed: "God often works more by the life of the illiterate seeking the things that are God's, than by the ability of the learned seeking the things which are their own."

"What does it avail," said St. Augustine, "to be occupied with continual study, reading the actions and writings of the saints, unless we imbibe their justice by masticating and ruminating, transmit them by glutination down to the depths of our hearts, considering in them our own state, and endeavoring to imitate the deeds of those of whom we read?"

"Amongst all the occupations of men," writes St. Thomas Aquinas, "the most sublime, the most useful, and the most agreeable, is the study of wisdom."

"It is not the reading of books that gives this knowledge," observed St. Bernard, "but the interior unction; it is not the dead letters, but the spirit; not the profound researches, but the execution of God's commandment."

"Love is knowledge," remarks St. Gregory; and St. Augustine added, "love is an eye, and to love is to see."

"Let no one seek by human wisdom," admonished Richard of St. Victor, "those things which are above human wisdom."

"There is a certain secular science," we are told by St. Bernard, "which inebriates not with charity, but with curiosity, which fills but does not nourish, inflates and does not edify, swells and does not strengthen."

"Thou knowest, O Lord," confessed Petrarch, "before whom is all my desire that I have never sought more from letters, than that I might be made good. Thou searchest the reins and the heart, knowest that even in youth I was never so desirous of glory as not to prefer being good to being learned."

"If we have made any proficiency," wrote the pious and learned Mirandola to his friend Ugolino, "it is the gift of God: to Him be praise and thanksgiving; if we have failed in anything, it is our imbecility, and let it be imputed to us."

In the Annals of La Trappe, the well-known Abbot de Rancé wrote the following concerning Father Euthyme, or Brother Euthyme, as he was called, according to the custom of monastic orders: "Although he had never studied nor received any tincture of letters, yet he had so solid a judgment and so quick a discernment, and God had given him so much grace and light, that he knew perfectly well the whole depth and extent of his profession; and as he had a right heart and a right will, and as he loved Jesus Christ with an ardent love, so did he take Him for a guide."

"He was so familiar with the Holy Scriptures,"

he further attested, "and had made such just and spiritual applications, that every one who approached him was consoled; and nothing has so fully convinced me that the science of the Saints, or rather of God, is not learned by books, but that it is only God who can infuse it into the heart, as when I saw this poor monk, who had acquired with so little study such pure and exalted wisdom."

The Christian teacher, least learned, but conversant only with the Lives of the Saints and the Imitation of Christ, may be said, like that hoary man of whom the poet sings:

> "To have spent his live-long age
> In converse with the dead, who leave the stamp
> Of ever-burning thoughts on many a page
> When they are gone into the viewless damp
> Of graves:—his spirit thus becomes a lamp
> Of splendor, like to those on whom it fed."

"We ought as willingly to read devout and simple books," teaches Thomas à Kempis, (1) "as those that are high and profound.

"Let not the authority of the writer offend thee, whether he was of little or great learning; but let the love of pure truth lead thee to read.

"If thou didst know the whole Bible by heart, and the sayings of all the philosophers, what would it profit thee, without the love of God and His grace?

"The doctrine of Christ surpasseth all the doctrines of the saints; and whosoever hath the spirit, will find therein a hidden manna.

"Do not take pride in thy talents or thy wit, lest thou displease God, to whom appertaineth every natural good quality and talent which thou hast."

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*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I, chap. V, 1, 2.*

## II.

### OTHER OPINIONS PERTAINING TO NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE.

Undoubtedly, knowledge is necessary to all. It matters not whether this knowledge be derived from the cultivation of letters, or obtained from experience. The fact is that we must know, for we are rational, and, therefore, intelligent beings. But particularly is knowledge most desirable on the part of those who follow an intellectual pursuit. Consequently, every teacher has absolute need of it, even if he were teaching only an elementary or primary class. It is a mistaken notion that seems however very prevalent, that any teacher is good enough for such classes. Suffice it here to affirm that the teacher in an elementary or primary grade should be master of his subjects, that is, *possess a thorough and comprehensive knowledge* of them, otherwise he may do the children an irreparable injury, from which they *may possibly recover only* after untold, patient labor on the part of more skillful and efficient teachers. How many bright intellects have not been ruined, owing to the *ignorance* of teachers! It is, then, of paramount importance that all branches of the curriculum, even the elementary, be taught with a thoroughness and intelligence that bespeak a mastery of the subject-matter.

The most essential qualification of a good teacher, however, is the power of communicating this knowledge to those whom he is to instruct. This is a qualification often wanting in men who are otherwise very learned.

As Bishop Dupanloup had wide experience in educational matters, his opinion, concerning the qualifications of professors, is worthy of our appreciation.

"For a professor," wrote this eminent educator and scholar, "to know how to teach is, in a measure, of greater importance than a knowledge of what to teach. The knowledge of this practical truth, gleaned by experience and subsequent reasoning, was one of the principal, if not also the strongest, reason that urged me, never to employ as professor, a truly erudite scholar. Professionally, I have observed that the most learned professors were frequently lacking the ability of imparting to others their own knowledge, simply because their extensive erudition seemed to embarrass them, and their great, powerful intellects proved apparently a barrier to communicating knowledge. It is, therefore, not at all improbable that the erudite scholar, Huet, (1) was but a makeshift as teacher to the great Dauphin of France. Now, to laud a professor because of his talents and knowledge, would indeed be, in my estimation, poor praise. To say that a teacher possesses much knowledge is, in my opinion, but a poor recommendation. Can you state with equal assurance that he knows well what he should know? Can you as positively affirm that he has the tact and ability of imparting to others the knowledge which he has so painstakingly acquired? For you should not become oblivious to the fact that it is not here merely a question of knowledge, but

*(1) Pierre Denis Huet, Bishop d'Avranches, was born at Caen, in 1630, and died, in 1721. He was remarkably proficient in general literature, mathematics, physics, and kindred studies. He founded an Academy of Physics, in 1662.*

whether or not the teacher knows *how to teach the children, not what they do not know, but that which they should know.* Now, while learning is good, aye, very necessary, remember nevertheless that erudition is of little avail to a teacher, unless the other accompanying qualifications be not wanting. You seem to praise the professor of the fourth class for his scholarly attainments, but does he adapt himself to the limited capacity of his pupils, so that the least intelligent one of them comprehends him? Does he, as St. John Baptist de la Salle counsels, give his lessons with clearness, order, method in the arrangement of his subject-matter, that it may facilitate thorough understanding, prevent confusion in the minds of the pupils, and that it may beget neither weariness nor disgust for study, much less draw contempt upon himself?

"It should not be forgotten that there is knowledge and knowledge. Apart from the knowledge, properly termed science, there is also the knowledge of knowing how to say what we know, as well as knowing how to do what we know, which is so essential to a professor, if he wishes to control and advance his pupils. It is needless to mention the knowledge of knowing how to be gentlemen, of which many, however, give evidence of complete ignorance."

Besides, good is accomplished not according to the degree of one's intellect, talent, and natural endowments, but rather in proportion to his sanctity.

What more striking manifestation of this could be offered than the simple Curé d'Ars? How many clergymen and doctors were far more learned than

this venerable Father Vianney! Nevertheless, who among them has accomplished such astounding works? And yet, there is no need for being surprised, for our Lord did not say that "the most learned shall do the most good," but He promised fruitfulness to abnegation, union with God, faith, and holiness, as we read in St. John the Evangelist:

*He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit.* (1)

*Unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground, die, it remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* (2)

*Be ye sanctified,* said Josue to the Israelites, *for the Lord will do wonders among you.* (3)

It has been well said that *prayer alone* makes the Carthusian, a sublime calling, a celestial lightning-conductor of the Church and the world; *study alone* gives us the man of science, who wields such a great moral power either for good or evil; *action alone* constitutes the workman, an intelligent machine which gives and receives motion; but that which makes the apostle, the Christian teacher, is the union of *prayer, study, and action.*

Hence, "teach perfectly what you know," said St. John Baptist de la Salle, "and teaching well what you do know will merit for you the grace to learn what you do not know." These pregnant words of the saintly and scholarly educator are applicable to our ministry, study, and acquisition of virtue.

And what is the profound teaching of St. Paul, the Doctor of the Gentiles, concerning vain knowledge?

*(1) c. xv, 5. (2) Ibid., xii, 25. (3) c. iii, 5.*

*For the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God, is stronger than men. For see your vocation, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble. But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; but the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and things that are not, that He might bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His sight. But of Him are you in Christ* JESUS, *who of God is made unto us wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption, that, as it is written: He that glorieth may glory in the Lord.* (1)

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## III.

### RODRIGUEZ ON CONFORMITY TO GOD'S WILL IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF NATURAL GIFTS AND TALENTS.

We must all be content with the gifts and talents which God in His infinite wisdom, has accorded to us. There is no doubt that all men have received special endowments, consequently, we should be satisfied with our share, instead of envying those who may have been more richly endowed. There is, however, within us a bad leaven, owing to our concupiscence, and, therefore, we should be upon our guard lest the superior

(1) *I Cor., ii, 25-31.*

talents of others tempt us to envy. They have notwithstanding their defects which may counterbalance these advantages, and thus render necessary to them that moderation and conformity to God's will which we have mentioned. Consequently, it is our duty to take such prudent measures that the enemy of our salvation may not conquer us, by making us his dupes.

Let us take a practical, ordinary occurrence. You are now pursuing with earnestness and assiduity your course of studies. The day appointed for the public examination is near at hand. Now, if at this examination others distinguished themselves and passed a more brilliant one than was your fortune to do, the thought of their success has perhaps instilled into your heart the poison of envy. Now, this envious breath may doubtless not influence you to such an extent that you become thereby afflicted and tormented at your companion's superior talents, but you may perchance feel ashamed and keenly disappointed that others should have excelled you. Whence will frequently spring sadness and discontent. Possibly this may have the sinister result of causing you to give up your course altogether, or, perhaps, even religion itself. It has done so to others, because they had not laid deep foundations in humility. Some there are who had pictured to themselves a brilliant future, and presumed to attain to a great eminence in their studies, thereby acquiring a world-wide reputation, a great name for erudition and scholarship. Unhappily their expectations were never destined to be realized. Having been thus bitterly disappointed in their cherished dream of future greatness, they were

overwhelmed with shame and confusion at their signal failure, thus affording the wily tempter an excellent opportunity to blind and dupe them, and yielding to his suggestions, they concluded that the only course left open to them of avoiding the disgrace incurred, would be to abandon their vocation.

Now, if we wish to avoid a similar misfortune, we must take some salutary means to safeguard ourselves against possible temptations to vain-glory. The surest and most effective remedy for our wounded pride is a deep, profound humility. For it may justly be ascribed to the want of this virtue that we become discontented with the poverty of our mental gifts, and consequently displeased at the more fortunate endowments of our companions. We can not bear the thought of being outclassed in natural talents or brilliant attainments. How then would it be if, owing to our mental inferiority, we were prevented from pursuing our studies further, and constrained to witness the promotion of our companions to the more advanced courses, until they became great, erudite scholars? Evidently, unless we were securely grounded in humility and Christian resignation, we would hardly withstand the trial. Now, even supposing that we had successfully prosecuted our studies to the end, we would still have need of great humility when we saw our companions preferred to us and advanced to positions for which we had been adjudged incompetent. And even though we should have never cultivated our intellect, humility is still necessary for us that we may not fall a victim to vain regrets and chagrin. It may happen that like temptations

may come upon us with such force, and prove so strong and violent, that, unless we are constantly upon our guard, we may not only lose esteem for our sublime ministry, but, possibly, even endanger our salvation.

Thus far, the considerations are indeed only generalizations. Hence it is expedient that each one should make the special application suited to his particular state and condition, and to the circumstances under which he may be placed. For it is the imperative duty of every one to be conformed to the Divine will, and to be content with the talents he has received from God, or with the state in which he is placed, neither desiring nor seeking to be aught else, save what is agreeable to Him.

St. Augustine, commenting on these words of the Psalmist: *Incline my heart to the practice of Thy commandments, not to avarice,* (1) affirms, that avarice here implies all kinds of ill-regulated desires, and that it has been the source of all our misfortunes. What was it that banished our first parents from the terrestrial paradise and robbed them of all the prerogatives they had enjoyed? It was because they desired to become greater than God had created them and to become endowed with greater gifts than God had bestowed upon them. *You shall be as gods,* said the serpent, *knowing good and evil.* (2) This was the flattering, seducing bait which the tempter proffered them to ensure their ruin. We, too, have inherited from our first parents the presumption to be as gods,

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*(1) Ps. cxviii, 36.*
*(2) Gen., iii, 5.*

that is, inherited their folly, or rather madness, in striving to become greater than we really are.

This argument the enemy of our eternal welfare employed so successfully against our first parents, and he fails not to use it effectively to this day to seduce and ensnare men. Nothing is left untried to persuade and urge us, or to tempt us into the ambitious desire to be more or greater than God has destined us to be, to excite or lure our ambition for exalted stations, and to be possessed of more brilliant mental endowments other than those God in His infinite goodness has already bestowed on us. Hence it is, says St. Augustine, that the Royal Prophet implores God to give him a heart wholly disinterested, a heart faithfully inclined to whatever is acceptable to His divine will, and a heart altogether freed from self-complacency and selfish interests. For indeed, the word avarice, implies not only a desire of riches, but also honors, glory, pleasures, and generally, all kinds of concupiscences. St. Paul, likewise, takes it in this sense, when he says *covetousness,* or avarice, *is the root of all evil.* (1)

Now, if we had no other motive for being content with the endowments God has bestowed upon us, or with the state and condition wherein he has placed us than that of the Divine Will, it alone should suffice to oblige us to a perfect conformity to the orders of His benign Providence. For, *all these things,* says St. Paul, *one and the same spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as He wills.* (2) In proof of this truth, the Apostle employs the metaphor of a man's

*(1) I. Tim., vi, 10. (2) I. Cor., xii, 11.*

body. As in the body of a man, he says [1], God has placed the members as He deemed proper. Now, the feet murmured not because they were not the head, nor the hands, because they were not the eyes, so also in the body of the Church, as in that of a religious congregation, God has placed and arranged the members according to His Divine Wisdom. For it does not happen by chance that some are entrusted with one function and others with another, but it is so by a special ruling of His Providence. Consequently, if it should prove acceptable to God that we should be the feet in our Congregation what presumption have we to aspire to be the head? And if He would have us be the hands, by what prerogative would we claim to be the eyes? O how profound and incomprehensible are the judgments of God! *For who among men,* we read in *Wisdom, is he that can know the counsel of God? Or who can think what the will of God is?* [2] Thou art, O Lord, the source of all things, and hence we ought to praise Thee, whatever may happen, for Thou knowest what is most proper and expedient for each one, and why Thou dost confer more talents and gifts upon one than upon another. It is not for us, O Lord, to penetrate into Thy secret designs.

Again, who knows what would happen or become of us, had we been gifted with a more brilliant and penetrating intellect? How do we know that if we had achieved greater success or more striking results in our ministry, it might not have been the cause of our ruin, like so many others whose pride and vanity

(1) *Cf. I. Cor., xii, 14-24.*
(2) *c. ix, 13.*

precipitated them into their final perdition? Now, if we who possess such limited knowledge and so few natural gifts, and a knowledge but very mediocre, possibly not even that, would we dare have the presumption to compare ourselves to others or even prefer ourselves to them? Should we consider it as a personal affront to have been ignored in the selection for higher offices? What then would be our actual conduct, were we masters of those rare qualities and parts, and possessed in a high degree with extraordinary gifts and remarkable endowments? Have we forgotten the pregnant adage: *Wings are not given to the ant, save for her ruin?* Could we say that it would be inapplicable to us, were we the possessors of such wonderful talents?

Now, if instead of viewing facts through the prism of a disordered imagination, we consider them in their true aspect, we will have just reasons to thank God all our life, for having placed us in a state of subjection and humility, or for having conferred upon us only a limited share of natural talents. We may truthfully affirm with pious Thomas à Kempis: *O Lord God, I take it for a great benefit, not to have much, which outwardly and according to men might appear praiseworthy and glorious.* (1)

The saints thoroughly understood the danger which accompanied these great gifts and advantages, consequently, they abstained not only from desiring them, but they even dreaded them, because they were fully aware that those who were thus favored, were greatly exposed to vain-glory. Thus it was that they,

(1) *The Following of Christ, Book III, ch. XXII, 4.*

preferring humility of heart to sublimity of genius, became so pleasing in the sight of God. If we, therefore, with the poor talents and limited knowledge that we possess, can find the means to be more pleasing to God, why do we concern ourselves in searching for what we have not or can not attain?

Again, if the motive inducing us to acquire such knowledge be to render ourselves more acceptable to God, it is doubtless very commendable. Nevertheless, were it more pleasing to Him that we should remain in ignorance or poverty of knowledge, as it certainly is, since He so ordained, why are we then so displeased or annoyed? Hence, why strive to be what God has never destined us to be, or what is not expedient that we should be?

After Saul had vanquished the Amalecites, the great and magnificent sacrifices which he had prepared were not at all acceptable to God, because they were not conformable to His holy will. Thus these great and ambitious desires which we conceive and dream of accomplishing, may be as little agreeable to God, as the sacrifices of Saul. For, let us not deceive ourselves, our spiritual progress consists not in being able catechists, or learned professors, or in being the recipients of great lights and helps, splendid talents, and honorable positions, but rather in accomplishing God's will, in giving a just and faithful account of our ministry, and in causing the talents and gifts conferred upon us to fructify. To attain this end, therefore, we must needs direct exclusively our best efforts, since this is what God demands exclusively of us. (1)

*(1) Alphonsus Rodriguez, Christian Perfection, Vol. II, Part VIII, c, XV.*

# SEVENTH OBJECTION.

## LACK OF DUE APPRECIATION IS DISHEARTENING.

> How would you be,
> If He, which is the top of judgment, should
> But judge you as you are? O, think on that;
> And mercy then will breed within your lips,
> Like man new made."—*Shakespeare.*

The work an unknown good man has done, we are told by Carlyle, (1) is like a vein of water flowing hidden under ground, secretly making the ground green. Whence comes then this itching for praise, this insatiable thirst for appreciation? It may evidently be attributed, either to the innate desire there is in every human heart for praise, as Young admits when he declares that

> "The love of praise, howe'er conceal'd by art,
> Reigns more or less, and glows in ev'ry heart;" (2)

or to the lack of that purity of intention and generous disinterestedness of motive, which should characterize every Christian teacher. Perhaps, we have not yet fully grasped the true significance of our ministry, and, consequently, we have not wholly put aside the old man with his concupiscences and worldly interests.

Now, we must work either for God or for man. Undoubtedly, the teacher's task is hard, painful, and wearisome enough in itself, and unless he have exalted views and high aspirations, he will assuredly find it

*(1) Essays, Varnhagen von Ense's Memoirs.*
*(2) The Love of Fame.*

disheartening. But let him enter upon it with lively Christian faith and love, and he will become altogether indifferent to the opinions and praises of men. Even Pindar acknowledged that whatever is done without God, is not the worse for being consigned to silence and oblivion. If our work is for God alone, what need we concern ourselves about empty praise and transitory fame? Indeed, if fame were not vanity in itself, observes a great writer, its capricious and unjust dispensation would prove it worthless. For nothing human is more untrustworthy than the judgments of men. Moreover, if our aim or object be the praises of men, then we have already received our wages.

The Christian teacher should not consider the present, but the future; he should look to God for his eternal reward, and not to man for a false esteem or appreciation. Hence "whatever you do," says the great St. Anselm, "do all for future benefit, in expectation of the eternal recompense: a future, not a present recompense is promised to the Saints; in heaven, not on earth, reward is promised to the just. What is to be given elsewhere must not then be expected here. Be dead to the world, and let the world be dead to you. As if dead, look upon the glory of the world; as if buried, be not careful of the world; as if dead, cease from earthly cares. . . . . *Study nothing on account of praise, nothing on account of temporal opinion, nothing for the sake of fame, but all things on account of eternal life.*" (1) Truly, it is a wretched thing, said Juvenal, to live on the fame of others.

(1) *Lib. Exhortationum.*

Why, then, seek our happiness here, where disappointment, discontent will inevitably be our portion? Heed rather the timely message of the poet:

> "I might relate of thousands, and their names
> Eternize here on earth; but those elect
> Angels, contented with their love in heav'n,
> *Seek not the praise of men.*"

Washington Irving has written nothing truer than that "the idol of to-day pushes the hero out of your recollection; and will in turn be supplanted by his successor of to-morrow." (1) Thus it is always with fickle man.

The Christian teacher who labors with a singleness of purpose, is too concentrated upon the great work that demands his best energies and noblest endeavors, to allow himself to abuse them in search of vanity or worthless praise.

It is to him a matter of holy indifference, what judgment the world may pass upon him. It will not change him. He is still what he is in the sight of God and his own conscience. Moreover, true worth has never yet been fully appreciated, at least, in its own time. As an instance, take some of the great lights who have won fame and distinction in the world of science and letters. Time is tardily rendering them the justice which was denied them during their struggling, often impoverished, careers. Think, again, of the thousands who receive absolutely no recognition whatever, and who, nevertheless, left "monuments more enduring than brass."

Of men of this category the poet wrote:

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*(1) The Sketch Book.*

"Great men die and are forgotten.
Wise speak; their words of wisdom
Perish in the ears that hear them." (1)

They did not labor for that transient appreciation or recognition which so many seem to covet. Christian teachers should be content, therefore, to remain in seclusion, working nobly and silently, regardless of what men may say or think of them. They have the consolation of knowing that

"That best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love," (2)

are not without their due appreciation and proper recompense. How beautifully Gray expresses the same thought, when he affirms that

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air." (3)

Longfellow assures us that

"The surest pledge of a deathless name
Is the silent homage of thoughts unspoken." (4)

No true Christian teacher should ever look upon the approval of men as an adequate reward for his labors. For he is doing duty for a higher purpose than a mere temporal gain or renown. Even the old Roman moralist, Seneca, held the opinion that he deserves praise who does not what he may, but what he ought. Reason will also affirm that one should not put his trust in any man, if he would secure peace of mind and tranquillity of heart. How very fickle

*(1) Longfellow, Hiawatha. (2) Wordsworth, in Tintern Abbey. (3) Elegy. (4) The Heroes of Elmwood.*

a thing is praise! It is but an opinion that passes by "as the idle wind." The poet admits that

> "Opinion's but a fool, that makes us scan,
> The outward habit by the inward man." (1)

And, how admirably Terence expresses the truth when he declares that each wishes for his own advantage, rather than that of others. Evidently, the Christian teacher who would consider his sublime ministry discouraging, because men do not flatter or praise him, is indeed far below the high ideal which he should possess. For, of what avail is this coveted appreciation? It flatters our self-love and vanity, but makes us no greater than we are. It does not tend to make us more patient, noble, or disinterested, the characteristics of a genuine Christian educator. It adds nothing to our talents and tact, nor does it make us more efficient teachers. But when rightly viewed, it has unquestionably diminished our real merits and dimmed our true glory before Him, who is the discerner of all hearts and the infallible judge of all our motives, since our sole ambition was to shine before the world and win the applause of men.

Now, the Christian educator who daily exercises himself in serious meditation on the vanity of all things human, who contrasts time with eternity, who cleanses his soul through the saving sacrament of Penance, who purifies it in the crucible of suffering, who nourishes it frequently with the Bread of the Strong, and who renews his pure intention by frequent aspirations, will never be tempted to murmur

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*(1) Shakespeare, Pericles, Act. II.*

on account of being neglected by the world, or of not being sufficiently appreciated by his pupils and their parents. Indeed such language is altogether foreign to a generous heart, for he esteems himself happy to be despised and contemned for Christ's sake. He will, moreover, heed the words of his Divine Master: *How can you believe, who receive glory one from another* (1) Undoubtedly, we are no greater than Christ who declares: *I seek not my own glory.* (2) *I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.* (3) *I receive not my glory from men.* (4)

St. Paul who possessed such brilliant talents and had received such wonderful interior lights, never considered his own advantage, but generously sacrificed all to gain souls to Christ. Full of this apostolic spirit, he wrote to the Corinthians: *For I seek not the things that are yours, but you. . . . . But I most gladly will spend and be spent myself for your souls.* (5) The same noble generosity animates his words to the Thessalonians, to whom he says: *We speak, not as pleasing men, but God, who proveth our heart. . . . . Nor sought we glory of men, neither of you, nor of others. . . . . So desirous of you, we would gladly impart unto you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own souls; because you were become most dear unto us.* (6)

In this noble language we can readily recognize the spirit that should be the guiding principle of every apostolic man. When confronted with incomparable men of this class, how truly pitiable becomes the

(1) *St. John, v, 14.*
(2) *Ibid., viii, 50.* (3) *Ibid., v, 30.* (4) *Ibid., v, 41.*
(5) *II. Cor., xii, 14, 15.* (6) *I. Thess., ii, 4, 6, 8.*

Christian teacher who so slaveishly labors to win the esteem and praises of men and to gain an honorable, enviable position, or a great name and reputation! What an antithesis to the spirit of his sublime ministry! What a deplorable pitfall he is making for his pride and vanity! What untold misery and disappointment he is foolishly preparing for himself!

"If thou set a value upon anything temporal," teaches the Christian philosopher, Thomas à Kempis, (1) "thou wilt fail exceedingly.

"Let nothing be great in thy eyes, nothing high, nothing pleasant, except it be purely God, or of God.

"Look upon as vain all the comfort which thou meetest with from any creature.

"A soul that loveth God despiseth all things that are less than God.

"None but God, eternal and incomprehensible, who fills all things, can afford true comfort to the soul, and true joy to the heart."

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## I.

### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES, AN APOSTOLIC MAN.

A clergyman, attached to the household of St. Francis de Sales, hearing him promise to preach, on a certain festival, in one of the churches, expostulated with him, remarking that he had already promised to do so elsewhere.

"Never mind, my dear Sir," answered the Saint,

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book II., Ch. V., 3.*

"God will grant us the favor of multiplying our bread, for He is rich in mercy to those who trust in Him and implore His aid."

"But will not your health suffer on account of this additional exertion?" was the rejoinder.

"Now, if God enlighten the mind with good thoughts, He will most assuredly strengthen the body, the instrument wherewith the word of life is to be dispensed. Are we not by reason of our very dignity constrained to be the light of the world? Why complain then that the torch is being consumed while it gives light?"

"Withal, does God forbid us to look after our health?" enquired the clergyman.

"Unquestionably He does not, but He as positively commands us to trust in His goodness. Hence, if we were asked this instant to preach a third sermon on that day, I would experience greater pain in refusing to do so than in delivering it. Should we not sacrifice ourselves, body and soul, for the good of our neighbor, since Jesus Christ loved him to such an extent as even to lay down His life for him?"

Following out this principle, it happened not unfrequently that the Saint agreed to preach three or even four sermons on the same day. When any of his friends would kindly interpose, he would meekly say to them:

"My heart can not refuse. I find it easier to give the sermon than to bring myself to say, no. Now, were I to enter into your views, I should have to appoint a secretary who would entertain all such propositions, for I could never have the heart to give a re-

fusal. Besides, the very texts of my sermons urge me to grant all such requests, for *true charity, regarding not its own advantage, considers only the interests of God and those of our neighbor.* What avail after all is the little good we can do, when we remember what Moses said to the Lord: *Strike me out of the book that Thou hast written;* (1) and St. Paul declared: *I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren.*" (2)

We shall never find our true interests, save when we sacrifice them. *For whosoever shall save his life,* said our Lord, *shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel shall save it.* (3)

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## II.

### SOME PREGNANT SENTENCES.

"Is it not an absurdity," says Father Lallemant, (4) "that there should be found, even in religious communities, men whose sole delight seems to be in those things which can make them appear great in the eyes of the world! Men who, for twenty or thirty years, perform all their actions with the single view of raising themselves in the estimation of their fellow-man; who experience only joy or sadness in proportion as they attain or fail in their purpose; or, at least, who are far more sensible thereto than to all other things! Whatever refers to God or to their own per-

(1) *Exod., xxxii, 32.* (2) *Rom., ix, 3.* (3) *St. Mark, x, 35.*
(4) *Doctrine Spirituelle.*

fection becomes insipid to them, and they experience no pleasure whatever in their attainment.

"This unhappy state is very deplorable and should be condoned by tears of blood. For what spiritual progress is possible to such unfortunate religious? What effective good can they accomplish for their neighbor? And what will be their utter confusion at the hour of death, when they shall see that during the whole course of their life, they had ambition only for the glory and vanity of the world."

## III.

### GREAT WORTH ENHANCED BY PROFOUND HUMILITY.

The exalted or lowly position that may be entrusted to a humble and devoted Christian teacher, is to him a matter of little consequence. For he has but one purpose, and that is to accomplish God's will and to save his soul. If he should succeed in this one object, he is wholly indifferent whether the field of his zealous labors which obedience assigns him, be esteemed great in the eyes of the world, or mean, or contemptible. He is supremely happy in the performance of his duty, because the commands of his superiors are to him only so many evident manifestations of God's will.

St. Canisius, of the Society of Jesus, furnishes us a practical illustration of this truth. Germany was in great admiration at the powerful preaching and shining virtues of the Saint. The Rev. Father Hoff, his Provincial, nevertheless, ordered him to go to Augsburg to replace a fellow-religious whom neces-

sity obliged to be absent for a year. This test of obedience was doubtless severe on human nature. But the superior desired to give St. Canisius a relaxation as well as a distraction from his profound and assiduous studies, and indirectly, to place before the younger brethren a charming example of perfect obedience and humility.

The Saint instantly obeyed, and accordingly made the necessary preparations for his immediate journey.

"My dear Father, I trust that you will soon return to resume your labors," observed a fellow-worker; "for it must be a very great privation to you to relinquish them."

"Let the studies perish!" was the unhesitating answer of the fervent Canisius, "provided that the obedience which I have vowed, remain intact!"

He was found at his post at Augsburg on the appointed day. When at the expiration of the year, the Father came back, St. Canisius returned to his interrupted studies with as much ardor as though he had never left Dillengen.

The only relaxation he had permitted himself, was to spend several hours of each day in holy contemplation. The brethren who labored and studied with him, became alarmed at his assiduity to study, and feared the consequences of such a continual mental strain on his physical constitution. They considered themselves perfectly justified in communicating their apprehensions to the superiors. Accordingly, St. Canisius received orders occasionally to interrupt his mental labors, and to indulge, as a relaxation, in some physical exercises.

Thenceforth, the learned Canisius could frequently be found recreating himself in the meanest, lowliest employments of the house. It was not an uncommon thing to find him, broom in hand, sweeping the stairways or corridors. He did everything with the utmost care and scrupulous attention. In these humble duties, he found an excellent opportunity of practising humility, which rendered him perfectly happy, as his radiant, joyous, and modest countenance gave ample evidence. Sometimes he would go to the kitchen, and obey with alacrity the least wish of the Brother cook. One of his greatest delights was in preparing the vegetables for the meals, or in washing the dishes and kitchen utensils. Thus did he guard himself against the possible temptations to pride or vanity, suggested by the great celebrity he had obtained on account of his wonderful preaching. The poor and lowly he always treated with respect and consideration, never complaining even when they insisted upon importuning him. When some of his brethren would express surprise at such charming condescension, he would meekly answer him in the language, of our Divine Master: *Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* (1)

(1) *St. Matt., xviii, 3.*

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## IV.

### REASON WHY SOME MURMUR AT THE LACK OF APPRECIATION OR ATTENTION.

Whoever complains or murmurs does so ordinarily on account of wounded self-love. For, if we divest ourselves wholly of self and fix our hearts solely on God and the things pertaining to Him, we will have no cause to find fault at the seeming neglect we may have to suffer. Moreover, if we banish self from our daily calculations, we will always be content with the intercourse of our neighbor. But this tendency to murmuring is unfortunately one of our frailties, a bad leaven that we inherit from our first parents. It is nature opposed to grace. Therein shall we find the source of all our murmurings.

Consequently, "the reason of the complaints and murmurs of a teacher, who is dissatisfied with the position he holds," explains Father Surin, "may justly be ascribed either to a want of uprightness of intention and a want of love of God, or to infidelity in His service and lack of zeal for His glory. The true servants of God have no thought of themselves or their personal interests, but rather despise themselves, thereby rendering themselves more capable of devoting their whole strength to the advancement of their Master's honor and glory. Hence, the reason why the saints are ever reiterating to us the same thing and always in the same refrain, that the surest and safest way to serve God is to be unmindful of self, and to sacrifice everything we have to His glory. To lose our

reputation and to be abandoned by all those whose esteem we valued is unquestionably painful, if not cruel, to the unmortified man. Indeed, if we be not altogether dead to self, we will not easily turn aside from whatever may tend to flatter our passions. Consequently, it is not at all difficult to understand the privation of grace incurred, and the consequent commission of so many grievous offences. Self-love is the root of all the passions. These, being excited by it as if by tempestuous winds, cause violent agitations which usually end in a disastrous shipwreck. *If thou hadst once perfectly entered into the interior of Jesus,* says Thomas à Kempis, [1] *and experienced a little of His burning Love, then wouldst thou not care at all for thy own convenience or inconvenience, but wouldst rather rejoice at reproach, because the love of Jesus makes a man despise himself.* Would to God that we had tasted the sweetness of this love which, uniting our hearts to the Heart of Jesus, would induce us to enter into His views and accept His saving doctrine! Then we would give little attention to what the world might say or think, and our purity of intention would always be preserved intact."

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book II, chapter I., 6.*

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## V.

### WHEN GRACE ENLIGHTENS THE SOUL, SHE IS THEN CONVINCED THAT SHE MERITS PUNISHMENT RATHER THAN ESTEEM.

The heroic Marceau, commandant of the ARCHE D'ALLIANCE, had completed a cruise of forty-two months in the service of the mission. His noble undertaking throughout had been conducted with rare ability and success. On all sides were heard nothing but a unanimous chorus of thanksgiving and praise in honor of the zealous commandant of the expedition. He was not elated, but, being the more deeply penetrated with the sense of his nothingness, he conformed himself to the evangelical maxim: *When you shall have done all that was commanded you, still say: We are unprofitable servants.*

In writing to a friend, we find the following humble lauguage: "Pray to God that I may not be guilty of any foolishness which might in any way compromise my work. Ask of Him likewise, that I may employ the rest of my days more profitably and to better advantage than I have hitherto done. I have already entered upon my fortieth year, and I have commenced to love and serve God only the last six years! . . . . If I would do so only now!" And he signed himself: *The least of the children of Mary.* We glean also from other correspondence of this period that he thanked God for having enlightened him that *he merited nothing . . . . but eternal punishment.* This is the language and action of souls who work for God alone.

Another instance of his humility is manifest in the following event: When Commandant Marceau happened later on to anchor at Sydney, he was apprised of the action of his Holiness, who had conferred upon him the honorable title of *Knight of the Pontifical Order of St. Gregory the Great.* This proud distinction was a great stimulus to the faithful servant of the church, and was considered by him as a new manifestation of the Divine Will, concerning the great work which he had undertaken. His humility, however, was startled, and had it not been for the advice of his Director, Father Colomb, he would have kept this honor a profound secret. We are also informed that when he read the brief of the Pope, constituting him Knight, he could not refrain from shedding tears. Thus are noble souls esteemed and honored, even while seeking to remain unknown.

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## VI.

### HOW TO AVOID SELF-SEEKING AND TO ACQUIRE THE SPIRIT OF RENUNCIATION OF SELFISH INTERESTS.

"First, whatever may be our age and occupation," according to Father Surin, "we must needs desire and seek God only, and believe firmly that unless we do so we can not possibly stifle self-love. 'We do nothing but ramble amid flesh and blood,' said St. Augustine; 'we are always occupied in seeking our honor and pleasure; for, nothing sensibly affects us, save what touches our reputation or disturbs our re-

pose. We are not wholly unmindful of the things of God, but we bring ourselves to regard them with considerable carelessness and indifference. We view them as from afar; and should we chance, at all, to apply ourselves to them, it is only on extraordinary occasions. But, ordinarily, the success of our petty, insignificant projects engages our daily calculations.'

"Second, we must needs study how to die to ourselves continually; hence, we should conquer ourselves, not only in great things, but even in the very least. Indeed it is no small thing to renounce our own will in little things. St. Ignatius particularly commanded the members of his Society to study self-abnegation, that thus their mortification might be entire and continual. Whoever makes this his special study, will infallibly drive from his heart the greatest enemy of Divine love, which is no other than self-love.

"Third, we must needs be exceedingly attentive to direct our intention, that, through a simple and honest view, we may come to consider God in all things and refer all our actions to His glory. We should be very careful never to deviate from this line of conduct, either through a want of thought or through a natural impetuosity. Thus we will, at all times, be free to raise our hearts to God and unite ourselves more intimately to Him in accordance with the law of perfect love."

Moreover, a heart that is strongly and unswervingly attached to any object, or to a passion, or to some duty, should adopt some significant motto expressive of its aim in life, which would act as a talisman as well as an indication of the all-absorbing

powers of the soul. Every pursuit in life seems to have one indicative of its aim. *Glory* is the watchword of the soldier; *fame,* of the man of letters; *wealth,* of the merchant; *my children,* of the father of the family; *my salvation,* of the Christian. The saints, too, had their significant saying which expressed the sum of their lives. Thus, *All for the greater glory of God,* was the characteristic motto of St. Ignatius; *To suffer or die,* of St. Theresa; *Neither to suffer as now, nor yet to die, but to suffer more,* of St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi; *God alone,* of Commandant Marceau; *Glory to God, profit to my neighbor, suffering to me,* of an heroic soul. *God and souls are my all, everything else is worthless to me,* should then be the motto of the Christian teacher. If this motto be deeply engraved on his heart, it is impossible to conceive, how he will ever complain or murmur, when seemingly neglected or little esteemed by the world.

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## VII.

### SACRIFICE TO GOD, IN GOOD FAITH, ALL SELFISH INTERESTS.

"We pass whole years," writes Father Lallemant, (1) "and, sometimes our entire life, hesitating whether or not we should consecrate ourselves unreservedly to God's service. We can not bring ourselves to make the sacrifice complete. We seem to keep in

(1) *Doctrine Spirituelle.*

reserve so many affections, projects, desires, and pretensions, of which we do not wish wholly to divest ourselves with that perfect spirit of self-sacrifice, which disposes us to be occupied fully with God. These serve as so many bonds by which the enemy holds us attached to impede our progress in the way of perfection. We will be forced to confess, at the hour of death, how foolishly we have acted, and we will then also clearly perceive how we, like children, were amused by such trifles.

"We are for years struggling against God, and resisting His inspirations and the movements of His grace, which are ever interiorly urging us to escape from our miseries, by cutting off the vain amusements that arrest our progress, and, by devoting ourselves, without any misgivings, unreservedly to God. But, cowards that we are, overwhelmed by the weight of our self-love, blinded by our ignorance, constrained by false and unfounded fears, we hesitate, dare not take the step. And yet, fearing to be miserable, we will ever remain in misery, instead of giving ourselves completely and entirely to God, who desires that we belong to Him only to be free from our wretched bondage. We must, then, resolutely and forever, renounce honestly and sincerely all our selfish interests and pleasures, all our selfish projects and our self-will, to depend henceforth upon the good pleasure of God alone, and generously resign ourselves into His hands."

## VIII.

### SEEK NEITHER PERSONAL COMFORT NOR EASE.

On one of his official visits, Commandant Marceau was necessitated to land at Taiti. There, the only pieces of furniture in his dining room, were a rude white wooden table, and a plain board bench. In this modest appartment, the minister of France to Oceanica and the Commandant transacted their business and took their dinner, which consisted of two very meagre dishes, served from the nearest inn. Upon his return to Europe, this particular occasion and its attendant circumstances were recalled to the holy man's memory, and being asked how it was that so distinguished an officer of the Royal Navy could have relinquished the comforts and honors of his own table on board the vessel, and content himself with such personal inconvenience, and miserable fare?

"Ah!" he smilingly replied; *A man does not enter upon such a mission to enjoy his ease.*"

This beautiful thought should frequently constitute the subject-matter of the Christian teacher's earnest meditation. He devotes himself to duty, not to enjoy all the conveniences of life, or to obtain an honorable position, or to gain the esteem and applause of men, but to glorify God, save souls, and merit heaven.

This should be his sole ambition.

"Be vigilant, and delight in God's service," admonishes Thomas à Kempis, (1) "and often think with thyself to what end thou camest hither and why thou

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., Ch. XXV., 1.*

didst leave the world: was it not that thou mightest live to God, and become a spiritual man?

"Be fervent, therefore, in thy spiritual progress, for thou shalt shortly receive the reward of thy labors; and then grieve and fear shall no more come near thee.

"Thou shalt labor now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea, everlasting joy.

"If thou continue fruitful and fervent in working, God will doubtless be faithful and liberal in rewarding."

## EIGHTH OBJECTION.

### FREQUENT CHANGES ARE ANNOYING: A POSITION OTHER THAN TEACHING WOULD BE MORE SUITABLE.

"One day thou wilt be blessed;
So still obey the guiding hand that fends
Thee safely through these wonders for such ends."—*Keats.*

There is perhaps nothing to which self-love inclines us more than to maintain our opinions and judgments. The objection above stated is only another evidence of this truth. To hold opinions and judgments is in itself neither good nor bad. Indeed, it is very natural that a man, rational being as he is, should judge and form opinions on all matters that come under his observation. This is his birthright, and neither can it be said that the holding and maintaining of such opinions and judgments prevent him from attaining his perfection. But there is here a lurking danger, for we are most apt to become attached to them. Now, whenever that happens, then assuredly such opinions and judgments would be opposed to our Christian perfection, for they would unquestionably spring from self-love, which has its source in pride, and hence they become detrimental to our spiritual progress. For this inordinate love which we evidence for our own judgments would develop into obstinacy of will, one of the prolific sources of much misery. Consequently, those who love and esteem their own judgments and stubbornly maintain them, will rarely, if ever, become perfect.

And yet the poet declares that

> "A soul without reflection, like a pile
> Without inhabitant, to ruin runs." (1)

Now, honest reflection will convince us that others have an equal right to their judgments, which should have the tendency to make us less obstinate in matters where another's judgment or opinion may be of greater value than our own. For remember that we are never a good judge of our own case, for our bias is too pronounced. Self-love is averse to the naked truth. The poet conceived rightly when he said:

> "Mortal vision is a grievous bar
> To perfect judgment." (2)

Not unfrequently do we find men who cheerfully renounce their judgments and opinions concerning some matters and as joyfully submit their will to others, but who, nevertheless, reserve to themselves the perfect right of refusing to comply whenever their self-love suggests a more strongly preconceived course. We have many illustrations of this tendency of our fickle nature in the conduct of our pupils and in our daily intercourse with men. How often do we not hear persons declare: "I obey joyfully and submit willingly to such a teacher, professor, or superior;" and almost invariably add, "but such an one is too austere, harsh, and imperious, and hence I can not possibly bring myself to obey him implicitly." Evidently, there is here an imperfection and a clear proof that self-love holds them captive to their own judgment and opinion. Now, "no one can doubt,"

*(1) Young's Night Thoughts. (2) G. H. Boker.*

teaches St. Francis de Sales, "that this is very contrary to perfection, for it usually produces uneasiness of mind, frivolity, murmuring; and, lastly, it nourishes the love of our own esteem; therefore, neither our own opinion nor our own judgment ought to be loved and esteemed."

"In all our works, words, and thoughts," affirms Louis of Blois, (1) "we must sincerely seek God, and refer all things to His honor, and have a heart pure and free. It can not be said, how grateful to God and faithful to ourselves will be this holy intention." Moreover, "we ought not," said St. Anselm, "always wish what God wishes; but we ought to wish that which God wishes us to wish." (2) And elsewhere he admirably supplements this dictum: "God alone ought to wish anything of His own will. When man wishes anything of his own will, he takes away from God, as it were, his crown; and as the proper will of God is the source and origin of all good, so the proper will of man is the beginning of all evil." (3) Besides, "it is self-love," says St. Bernard, "that burns eternally in hell, for it ruins and destroys whatever it touches. If found in heaven, it is cast out; for the angels were banished only because of self-will, because they wished to become like God, and on that account were precipitated into hell. If found on earth, it robs man of grace, and subjects him to death, as happened to our first parents in the terrestrial paradise." Henry Suso likewise expressed this truth when he affirmed that "a soul truly submissive to the will

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*(1) Institution Spirituelle. (2) De Similitudinibus, cap. clix. (3) Ibid., c. viii.*

of God is attached to nothing created; it knows that all things, out of God, are vanity and nothingness; hence it has no other object in view than to die to itself, and to be resigned fully, always, and in all things."

Now, does any man doubt, asks Bacon, (1) that if there be taken out of men's minds *vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations,* as one would and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor, shrunken things, full of melancholy indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? And we may appropriately cite Bishop Ullathorne, a man of profound scholarship, erudition, and a close observer of human nature, who confirms Bacon's view. "The moment the scholar ceases to believe in his teacher or the disciple in his professor," he observes justly; "so soon as he begins to judge and criticize, he assumes superiority; his faith is gone, and he ceases to learn, for he has closed his mind to the authority of the teacher. If, notwithstanding, there is a real superiority of knowledge and wisdom in the teacher, it is the pride of the pupil that has closed to him the gate of knowledge." (2) This is merely another form of adhering to personal opinions or a manifestation of self-love. Hence it is that self-love makes us desire to do such and such a thing of our own choice, observed St. Francis de Sales, but we would not desire to do it if of another's choice, or from obedience. (3)

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*(1) Essay on Truth.*
*(2) The Groundwork of Christian Virtues.*
*(3) Letters.*

Whence it follows, that we must ask for nothing, renouncing our own opinions and judgments, becoming the willing instruments in the hands of our superiors. We must, moreover, concede to them the perfect right to form, hold, and maintain their opinions, for they are appointed by God to guide, direct, and govern. Now, were we to occupy ourselves with our own opinions, they would naturally entail a considerable loss of time and distract us from that perfect union with God, which is so essential to our sublime ministry. But, with superiors, it is altogether different. For they would be deemed wholly incapable and incompetent for their exalted, though onerous, position, if they did not form opinions and make determined resolutions, as St. Francis de Sales admirably teaches; but they ought not, on that account, to take pleasure in them or become attached to them, since this would be contrary to their perfection. "For it must always be remembered by superiors," remarks Bishop Ullathorne, "and especially by those who are the instruments of God's goodness to souls, that the graces of which they are the channels are not the graces for their personal sanctification, not *gratiæ gratum facientes,* but the graces given for others, the *gratiæ gratis datæ.*" Thus it is clearly manifest that superiors are endowed by God with special lights and graces to enable them to fulfill the many responsible duties of their high station. Moreover, their greater knowledge of matters in general and their greater experience guides them in their opinions and decisions as to what may be best for the general good. Hence we ought to ask with St. Paul:

*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?* George McDonald admirably expresses the idea when he declares that "obedience is the key to every door." [1] Indeed, if we ardently, sincerely wish to do effective work, submission to the will of our superiors is the surest and best way to do what God demands of us. "Where the authority of God is represented," observes Ullathorne, [2] "there a special reverence and submission is due, proportioned to the nature and extent of that authority; not to the man as he is man, but to the power and dignity of that authority which is inseparable from the man." And besides, "there is no greater error," he also notices, "than the vulgar notion that a life of obedience is a life without freedom. What authority does is to mark out a sphere of action; what obedience does is to fill up that sphere with free intelligence and judgment." Remember, furthermore, that "as the will in authority is wiser by position and experience than the will in obedience, the one improves the judgment of the other." And, therefore, "as the object of obedience," according to the teaching of St. Thomas, "is not our own will but the will of a superior, which may be either written law or rule, or the spoken will of the superior, obedience is generally more perfect when it is not only cheerfully complied with, but where there is least of our own will, way, or inclination in it, and most of the will of the superior. The reason is, that such obedience has a greater renunciation of self-love and self-will and calls for greater effort to overcome adverse

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*(1) In "The Marquis of Lossie."*
*(2) The Groundwork of the Christian Virtues.*

inclinations and external difficulties. Whilst, on the other hand, when everything goes our own way, we may be rather inclined to look to our own will than to the precept for our motive. But this is to be understood as it outwardly appears; for God, who sees the heart, may find a devoted obedience to the will of the superior which is not less praiseworthy in one whose inclination goes with obedience than in another who has to overcome an adverse inclination." (1)

It is obvious, therefore, that when obedience ordains or prescribes that we resign our present position to assume another, the superiors were, in a manner, forced to act thus on account of circumstances which the general good demanded. For it is a sound principle in all moral government that the individual must be sacrificed for the general good. And possibly, we were the subjects whom the superiors judged best suited or most competent, to meet the emergency and the special needs of both time and place. Hence, to murmur or to criticize would be a positive evidence of our imperfect will and of attachment to our own judgment. Superiors are in a better position to know what is demanded, and we would act wisely and prudently to obey cheerfully, being fully convinced that their order or command is our guarantee of God's will.

Besides, such changes may be productive of excellent results not only for ourselves individually, but also for those over whom we shall be placed. Therefore, let us heed the kindly admonition of Bishop Ullathorne, who is a safe and prudent guide in the spiritual life. "We must never anticipate," he coun-

*(1) Sum. ii, 2 q., 104, a 2 ad 3.*

sels, "but follow the leading of the Providence of God. If we anticipate the order of Divine Providence, we put our own will in the place of the will of God. . . . . Our Lord did not tell us to go before Him, but to follow Him; and the Prophet says: *It is good to wait with silence for the salvation of God.* Nature is excitable, impatient, and indeliberate; the help of God is calm, patient, and given in due season, according as He sees best for us. To rush in where God has not invited us, or to aim at wonders above ourselves, is to yield to the excitable impulsion of nature; but to follow the Divine leading of grace in humility and obedience is to act within the order of the Divine gifts."

St. Francis de Sales, who was remarkable for gentleness of spirit and conformity to God's will, ought to be regarded as a consummate teacher on this important question. Consequently, should we deem ourselves incompetent for the position obedience has assigned us, let us give his words a most careful and attentive study. "If you have no virtue or perceive none in yourself," he confidently assures us, "do not disturb yourself; for if, for the glory of God, or to satisfy obedience, you undertake the guidance of souls, or any other employment, whatever it may be, God will take care of you, and will be bound to provide you with all that may be necessary, as well for you as for those whom He will put under your charge. It is true, that what you are undertaking is a matter of great consequence and great importance; but, nevertheless, you would be wrong if you did not hope for good suc-

cess, seeing that you do not undertake it of your own choice, but to comply with obedience." (1)

Therefore, if we sincerely desire our own success, we must be as docile instruments in the hands of our superiors, as clay in the potter's hands. Above all, let us never obstruct their plans, but do whatever we are commanded with alacrity and cheerfulness. It is a matter of utter indifference to the true Christian educator when or where his services are called into requisition, or how often he may be transferred from one class to another. It suffices for him to know that the superior commands, and that it is his simple duty to obey. He will say with St. Canisius: Perish studies or anything that will interfere with my obedience; perish my own opinions and judgments that would raise within my heart a rebellious spirit and snatch away my crown! If such be our conduct, we may truthfully say with Horace: *I am not what I was,* that is, from being imperfect and attached to my own opinions, I have trampled upon self-love and self-will and followed the guidance and lead of a superior. Assuredly, we will not then complain, or presume to dictate what shall be best for us. Neither will we ever stoop to make use of any indirect means to get rid of an employment or bring about our change of position, remembering the warning of Thomas à Kempis: *He who striveth to draw himself from obedience withdraweth himself from grace.* (2)

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*(1) The Spiritual Conferences.*
*(2) Bk. III., c, xiii, 1.*

## ST. IGNATIUS' DICTUM CONCERNING PRUDENCE AND OBEDIENCE.

Father Laynez, who was among the first disciples of St. Ignatius, one day frankly acknowledged to him the ardent desire he had of going to India, saying: "Now, that I can no longer entertain any hope of going to the Holy Land, I do ardently and earnestly long to go to the Indies to labor for the salvation of infidels."

"As for me," replied St. Ignatius, "I have no such desire, and were I to feel any, I would certainly fight against it."

"But pray, how can that be possible?" asked the astonished disciple.

"As you are perfectly well aware," rejoined the Saint, "we are bound by a special vow to go whithersoever the Sovereign Pontiff shall be pleased to send us. Hence I must hold myself in readiness to go to any part of the world, and the East has no greater attraction for me than the West. Now, if I were to have any particular preference, as you acknowledged you have, I would deem it my duty to crush such a desire and render myself perfectly indifferent as to whatever I might be commanded. I can assure you, although old and decrepit as I am, I would not hesitate, at the least sign from his Holiness, to set out on foot, with only a staff in hand, for Spain or any other country. Nay, I should have no hesitancy to embark, provisionless, on any vessel, even were it destitute of sails and rudder. In this disposition of obedience I would have no adverse inclination to overcome, and I would even deem myself most happy."

"But, my dear Father," pleaded another member of his Society, "what would become of your usual habit of prudence?"

"Prudence," promptly answered the Saint, "is not the virtue of him who obeys, but it belongs to him who commands. For *the prudence of him who obeys consists in sacrificing prudence to obedience.*

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## II.

### THE ACTION OF SUPERIORS MUST NOT BE OBSTRUCTED: ASK NOTHING, REFUSE NOTHING.

It is of the utmost importance that we do not prove a hindrance to the plans and actions of superiors. For the greater freedom and liberty we allow them, the more certain is our hope of being blessed by God. Consequently, we should obey superiors no matter what motives may be alleged, even when they do not assign any formal reason for the orders they give. A certain bias of the will, perhaps even unknown to themselves, toward one side rather than the other not unfrequently hides the will of God concerning us, even perchance some great design in the order of His fatherly Providence. We should ever keep in mind this salutary counsel of the amiable St. Francis de Sales: *Ask nothing, refuse nothing, but leave yourself implicitly in the arms of Divine Providence, without being diverted by any desire, save wishing what God wills of you.*

For "superiors to govern wisely," says Father Valuy, "they must keep in view three things, about which inferiors need not concern themselves, namely: a general view of the whole society and its common good; a thorough knowledge of their inferiors as well as the requirements of the different employments and positions; and the general and special graces God grants to the ministers of His authority."

Now, we will never experience greater consolations and meet with more real success than in those duties which we have accepted without any concurrence on our part, and which were even averse to our natural inclinations.

The following incident is a striking illustration of this truth:

"We had the exceeding good fortune of being personally acquainted with a holy priest," relates Father Dubois, [1] "a man truly worthy of that beautiful title, and who frequently carried out in his conduct the rules of obedience which we had laid down. His superiors, being cognizant of the fact that he was ever ready to execute their orders, no matter whatever they might be, and being equally aware, that his zeal was equal to his obedience, made frequent calls upon him, particularly when they had for object the regeneration of some parish.

"They had already transferred him several times from one parish to another, whenever his labors were deemed necessary to the saving of souls. But, like a true, valiant soldier, he was ever ready to strike his tent at the word of command. Never did he allow

(1) *Guide du Séminariste et du jeune Prêtre.*

himself to be influenced by the consolations and joys he found in the different ministrations. The blessings of those whom he had so faithfully served, invariably accompanied him to his next mission; whereas his loss was deeply deplored by the many prodigals whom he had converted, and who had come to consider him as a tender father.

"Nevertheless, there came a day, when his obedience was to be put to a severer, more crucial test than it had hitherto been. Accordingly, he received a notification from the Bishop of his Diocese, appointing him Rector of a parish which enjoyed the unenviable distinction of being classed as the worst in the whole Diocese. The news of his appointment was soon noised about. Many of his personal friends and admirers came to him, urging him to decline the appointment. But the holy priest took a higher view of things and smilingly answered his friends with a charming simplicity: 'I am indeed grateful to you for the deep interest you seem to manifest in my welfare, but I must inform you that I can not lend an ear to your kind suggestions, much less follow your well-intentioned counsel. I can assure you, it is not due to a lack of appreciation for your friendship, but because I have already notified his Lordship of my willing acceptance.' Later on he informed us that *never did he experience so much consolation, nor exercised so fruitful a ministry as in that very parish.*"

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## III.

### HOW TO ATTAIN PERFECT INDIFFERENCE AS TO EMPLOYMENT.

"O sad estate
Of human wretchedness; so weak is man,
So ignorant and blind, that did not God
Sometimes *withhold in mercy what we ask,*
*We should be ruined at our own request!"*
—*Hannah Moore.*

Father Surin [1] points out the means we should adopt if we wish to attain to this perfect indifference concerning our employment.

"First, we must needs free ourselves," he says, "from all affection for creatures, give our heart wholly to God, and not view anything from its most attractive aspect. It is indeed natural for a man to consider the advantages of any employment to which he may be appointed, and to accept it only because it is congenial and honorable. Thoughts of this nature frequently suggest themselves to us, but there is nothing more opposed to our spiritual perfection. We should desire nothing save the accomplishment of God's will. This is the only thing worthy of our esteem, all else is deserving of contempt.

"Second, when we have undertaken any work, or engaged in any employment, and are praised for our success, then indeed we must needs be upon our guard against the pleasure springing from that low, natural joy which tends only to nourish and increase our pride. It is unquestionably natural that we take a certain degree of pleasure in success, but we should be

(1) *Fondements de la Vie Spirituelle.*

on our guard lest this take the place of that sweetness which we should always feel in whatever comes from God. We should not become attached to anything, save that which appertains to God's service, and, should we be confronted with obstacles therein, we must battle heroically, and banish from our minds all conflicting thoughts.

"Third, should we chance to be unsuccessful and should sadness strive to take possession of our hearts, we must needs be prompt and firm to prevent its entrance therein. If we act thus, it matters not what our temporal loss may be, we will never be disheartened, for, then, no calamity can deprive us of our peace of mind. We should, on the contrary, raise our hearts to heaven, that there we may, by faith, perceive God's goodness and mercy toward us, and thus we will free ourselves from that worry and chagrin which are, most ordinarily, caused by disgrace, failure, or loss. Indeed, it may even happen that after such sad experiences, we will feel as content as though we had suffered no loss, either in wealth or honor.

"Afflictions of this nature, however trivial they may appear, bring generally in their wake a great dejection and anxiety of mind, which are very detrimental to the soul, since they render it incapable of disengaging itself from things earthly, and thereby preventing an intimate union with God. Consequently, the soul, acting no longer through a motive of pleasing God, becomes naturally attached to creatures, remains in a state of constant unrest, and is necessarily the slave of many objects which divide its love and destroy its peace and happiness."

## IV.

### BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF INDIFFERENCE AS TO EMPLOYMENT.

In April, 1626, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, desirous of founding a new convent at Pont-à-Mousson, left Annecy, accompanied by Sister Paula-Hieronyma Favrot, whom she had appointed superior. Their departure was signalized by an edifying example of obedience.

It happened that Sister Favrot became ill a few days prior to the appointed date of departure, and Sister Bernardina-Margaret was selected to replace her. The latter was on horseback at the convent door, ready to proceed on her journey with the other sisters, when Sister Favrot unexpectedly appeared, having dragged herself out of bed, to bid adieu to Mother Frances de Chantal, who had already entered her litter. Seeing Sister Favrot, she kindly asked her how she felt. "Fairly well," was the simple response. "Well, then, come and take your seat beside me," said Mother de Chantal, "and let Sister Bernardina remain in the convent."

Instantly, without a word, while the one entered the litter, the other calmly and peacefully dismounted from her horse. Both thus testified that they were as ready to remain as to depart. This holy indifference was the more admirable as neither was ever heard to make the slightest allusion to this incident. Some time afterward, however, a certain person asked Sister Bernardina if she did not regret having been de-

prived of the pleasure of this extended and beautiful trip. She made this charming answer: "Is it not said of the master who had servants under him, that he said to one: Go, and he goeth; and to the other: Come, and he cometh?"

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## V.

### SECRET OF PRESERVING TRANQUILLITY IN THE MIDST OF THE ACCIDENTS OF LIFE AND THE LIKE.

> With equal minds what happens let us bear,
> Nor joy, nor grieve too much for things beyond our care."
> —*Dryden.*

"A man who is enlightened by heaven," says Father Surin, (1) "and who is governed by the true spirit of faith, thinks only of God, and counts all else as naught. He praises nothing, and proposes nothing to himself which does not purely pertain to God, or which does not directly lead to God. Whosoever acts otherwise, would find himself enveloped, as it were, by a dense darkness which can be dissipated only by the exercise of mental prayer. For it is therein that his soul is illumined by a supernatural light, whose principal effect is to open and dilate the heart, that it may raise itself to God, and thus learn neither to love or value anything, save things eternal.

"Since God has by His grace provided us with the means and graces for the acquisition of things supernatural, we ought not to amuse ourselves by running after those which are merely temporal, unless

(1) *Fondements de la Vie Spirituelle.*

we desire to render ourselves miserable. For, from the moment that we begin to form an exalted idea of things human, our mind is, that instant, obscured, and our heart is closed to the things of God. Hence the reason that we become so sensible to the slightest accidents, and allow ourselves to be disturbed by trifles. If we were, however, possessed of a magnanimous soul, we would have God ever present to our minds, and knowing Him as He is, often experiencing His consolations, we would feel a disgust for all things else, and thus stifle that natural tendency within us for seeing everything, hearing everything, and possessing everything. Whence comes, then, this inordinate desire for praise and esteem? Whence that sensible delight when we are advanced to a more honorable position? Whence comes this insatiable thirst for honors and distinctions? Ah! it is because of our ignorance of what constitutes the real good; it is because of our inability to comprehend the greatness of God and to estimate rightly the value of things eternal! If we fully realized the utter worthlessness of everything mundane, as did the holy souls who were, by prayer, closely united to God, we would shudder at the very thought of becoming attached to anything so contemptible as the false glitter and empty honors of the world. In this tendency we recognize a general law. Every man who knows not how to habituate himself to refrain from being affected by the good or the evil which happens, will always be found grovelling in the mire and dust of the earth. He will never be able to raise himself above sensible objects; he will veer with every wind,

and be the unhappy subject of all kinds of annoying influences. He will, moreover, for days, be the unfortunate victim of keen disappointments, and will be wounded by every imaginary reproach or insult. Indeed, he is in a state of continual agitation, an evident indication of little sense and a weak mind."

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## VI.

### THE HOLIEST PROJECTS MUST BE SACRIFICED WHEN OBEDIENCE COMMANDS.

Joseph Jame, a priest of the Foreign Missions, died, September 5, 1835, in India, in the odor of sanctity. Before entering this Congregation, which gave so many apostolic men and martyrs to the Church, he was continually meditating how he could give himself unreservedly and irrevocably to a life of suffering and privation, even to death itself, that he might thereby repay, so far as he could, the wonderful liberality of God who gave His life for him.

He made known his secret longings to the learned and holy Bishop, Mgr. Arbaud, whose memory is held in pious veneration throughout the diocese. He also acquainted him of the project he had formed of consecrating his life to the propagation of the faith. The virtuous prelate held converse with him on the sublimity of such a vocation and enlarged upon the essential qualities and virtues requisite therefor. He added, however, that he was sorely in need of good subjects, and that he had destined him to be pro-

fessor of the fourth class in the preparatory seminary. Furthermore, the Bishop placed upon him the restriction not to think of executing his project for at least a year, during which period he was to test his vocation and to determine definitely whether or not, his call was really from God.

Despite his ardent desire, Joseph Jame submitted with admirable docility and perfect obedience to the wishes of the Bishop. Precisely on account of the conformity to His will, God caused the absolute renunciation of this favored soul and the mortification of its desires to shine forth with special lustre. Throughout the year, he refrained from breathing a syllable to any one on this all-absorbing subject, being content to commune only with God concerning it.

In his correspondence of that year with his brother, we find the following passage which may have some trace of his vocation: "I am perfectly pleased with my present position. The future I leave in God's hand. It does not give me the slightest uneasiness. May God's holy will be done in all things! Indeed, if we wish to be happy, this is the safest and only course to follow. And the oftener I read this beautiful maxim of Thomas à Kempis, the more I am forced to admire it: *Renounce thy desires and thou shalt find peace.* Hence let us serve God each according to his lights and ability, and in the position His Providence has assigned us. *As for anything else, let us be wholly indifferent, and we shall find true peace, which even the utter confusion of the whole world can not disturb.*"

## VII.

### OBEDIENCE, THE PROPER MOTIVE, WHEN ASSIGNED TO A DIFFICULT POSITION.

"O what a glory doth this world put on,
For him who, with a fervent heart goes forth,
Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks
On duties well performed and days well spent!" (1)

One of the principal motives which ought to induce our acceptance with joy, of whatever employment obedience may assign us, is the certain knowledge that the will of our superiors is the will of God. Indeed this should be to every Christian educator a source of great consolation, for in doing what obedience prescribes or ordains, he has the positive assurance of accomplishing the will of the Divine Master. Nothing better corresponds to the needs of the soul than this salutary thought: It is God's will that I now do this or that act. Consequently, there should be nothing more desirable on our part, since nothing can be preferred to the fulfillment of the Divine Will. Now, whoever follows this principle will never be disturbed by any orders from his superiors, for it is a matter of little consequence to the true Christian educator, whether he shall be placed in a high or lowly position, since he has no preferences. God will always take care of those who generously renounce their own will, and implicitly place themselves in the hands of their superiors.

St. Francis Xavier is unquestionably a most striking illustration of this truth. There is not,

*(1) Longfellow, Poem on Autumn.*

perhaps, in the history of the Church, a vocation so remarkable, or an instance in which the guiding hand of Divine Providence is so clearly discernible.

We glean from the Life of St. Ignatius that he had selected Fathers Simon Rodriguez and Nicholas Bobadilla for the mission of the Indies. Simon Rodriguez, then in Rome, was in a very weakened physical condition, due to an intermittent fever from which he had been suffering for some time, but he prepared, nevertheless, to embark for Portugal in company with the Ambassador, Don Pedro Mascarenhas, who was about returning home. Nicholas Bobadilla happened to be in Calabria. Having been summoned to Rome by the Holy Father, he set out immediately; but the fatigue of the journey and a sudden excruciating pain in the leg prevented him from undertaking the sea voyage. The Ambassador, who was on the eve of his departure, could not possibly defer his trip until Bobadilla's recovery, and yet, not wishing to set sail without being accompanied by the two missionaries destined to evangelize the Indies, Francis Xavier was declared the substitute of the sick man. Considered from a merely human standpoint, this substitution, taking place as it actually did, under a pressing, urgent necessity, might be attributed to mere chance. There was, however, no chance here, for when rightly viewed, we will perceive in this choice, the accomplishment of an eternal design of Providence which had destined St. Francis Xavier to be the glorious Apostle of the Indies.

Now, as no great work was ever achieved without

its attendant difficulties, we need not be surprised that this undertaking was to prove no exception. No sooner had Simon Rodriguez and Francis Xavier landed in Portugal and commenced to preach, than they began to reap such an abundant harvest of conversions, that the Portuguese exerted themselves to their utmost to retain them in their country. Indeed so pressing were their demands that they had succeeded in keeping Simon Rodriguez who remained at Lisbon, while Francis Xavier continued on his journey. Apparently, this mission had suffered a check, but God's designs are not so readily frustrated. In the meantime, Francis Xavier received his orders to proceed to India, where he was destined to be the instrument of Providence in the saving of many souls. Let men plan whatever projects they please, and let them even employ all the means at their command to achieve their success, God will invariably make them subserve his own wise purposes, and draw therefrom the most fruitful results, conducive not alone to His own glory but also to our salvation.

St. Ignatius had destined Father Natal for a mission, but he determined, in his paternal goodness, to assure himself beforehand whether or not this good Father had any special preferences. When consulted on this important subject, Father Natal answered in writing that *his only desire was to have no desire.* He thereby gives us a touching proof of that self-sacrifice which St. Ignatius esteemed among the most precious qualities a true religious man can possess. For, he who evinces any particular affection for an object, or fosters any special preferences, seems to

subjugate all his powers to the service of a single motive; whereas, he whose heart has, as it were, but one responsive chord which always gives forth the same note when touched by the bow of obedience, he is the man who is capable of every kind of work. Now, as God judges our motives and intentions, and that in His sight to will is to act, it follows that such a man has, in the sight of the Lord, the merit of all those works as though he had achieved them.

Let this be the Christian educator's conduct through life, seeking and desiring only those things the Lord wills. If he accomplish this, an unalterable peace will be his portion, and heaven's abundant blessings will be poured down upon him as well as upon every work that shall be entrusted to him.

Terence has truthfully said: Since we can not have what we wish, let us wish for what we can have.

For, "it is a very great thing," says Thomas à Kempis, "to stand in obedience, to live under a superior, and not to be at our own disposal.

"It is much more secure to be in the state of subjection than in authority.

"Many are under obedience more out of necessity than for the love of God; and such as these are in pain, and easily repine.

"Nor will they gain freedom of mind, unless they submit themselves with their whole heart for God's sake.

"Run here or there, thou wilt find no rest but in an humble subjection under the government of a superior." (1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., Chapter IX.*

## NINTH OBJECTION.

### THE TEACHER'S LABORS ARE NOT RIGHTLY APPRECIATED.

"For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds."—*Congreve.*

This is another one of those objections which springs from wounded self-love. It has its source in vanity or vainglory, the eldest daughter of pride. It is an unmistakable evidence of the lack of purity of intention. God is not the sole object of our labors, and hence we trust to the judgments and praises of men, and look to them for approval. We seem to forget that the intention is the face of the soul, as St. Bernard teaches, and that a different intention constitutes a different fact. And according to St. Augustine, a work is excellent when the intention of the workman springs from the love of God, and returns again and again to test it in charity. Now, the Christian teacher who is discouraged, because, forsooth, men do not appreciate his labors according to his own standard, manifests the characteristics of vanity or vainglory which renders his work imperfect, if not really detrimental to himself and pupils. For "that is vain," affirms Bishop Ullathorne, "which is vacant, or devoid of good, or which is unstable, or unreliable, or unsupporting, or which has no rational object, use, motive, or end. That is a vain thing that fails of its purpose, or that will not do that which ought to be done, or will not sup-

port what has need of support. Vanity is labor in vain, and labor in vain is labor without fruit."

What then is this vainglory which enters so largely into our works? It is, we are assured by a Christian philosopher, an inordinate appetite for praise, fame, and glory. These are the puffings of an inflated soul, preferring the show of things to solid good. Again, "vainglory is the appetite or love of making excellence known, that it may be seen, admired, praised by men; whether that excellence has any real foundation, or is only imaginary, and therefore false." This is in perfect accord with St. Bonaventure's definition of vanity, namely, the love of one's own praise on account of apparent excellency. Bishop Ullathorne also observes that when the object of vanity is to exalt one's self in the general mind, it is fame; when admiration is sought to be added to praise, it is glory. He looks upon vanity, moreover, as the most subtle, elastic, and inventive of all human passions. Indeed, nothing is left undone to parade its littleness before the world. "Nothing is so ingenious as vanity," says Bishop Spalding. "It will find nourishment where common sense would starve."[1] Those who are governed by it, usually measure others by their own standard, at least, so thought Horace. It is equally singular that they should esteem their self-will as independence of character. But when we judge the question in its true bearing, it becomes obvious that the vainglorious are blinded by their own conceit, and consequently, can not perceive that they are undeniably their own dupes. Truly,

*(1) Aphorisms and Reflections, p. 71.*

there is a great deal of self-will in the world, Father Faber tells us in one of his excellent *Conferences*, but very little genuine independence of character. And elsewhere he says that self-opinionatedness is said to be the energy of dullness.

Now, if our work be one of excellence, we can not hope to merit the appreciation it deserves according to any worldly standards. But our frail nature inclines us unhappily to what flatters or tickles our vanity, and hence forgetting the supernal we stretch forward to snatch that which is purely sensible. The Christian teacher who acts thus, will ever be disheartened, for man is fickle and inconstant. He evinces pusillanimity of character, another offshoot of vanity. He lives in the constant fear or dread of what the world may say. And here we would remind him of the poet's opinion, who claims that

> "He's truly valiant that can wisely suffer
> The worst that men can breathe." (1)

Consequently, the Christian teacher lets his work speak, without putting it to speak for its author. He will, moreover, judge with Terence that the silence of men is sufficient praise. Livy also rightly says that men have less lively perception of good than of evil. Hence it is absurd, if not wholly ridiculous, for any teacher engaged in a work so essentially above the natural to allow himself to be influenced by the breath of false praise, or to permit his vanity to become his ruling motive. It is folly in the extreme.

But, how may we detect this subtle and elastic

(1) Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens, Act III.*

passion? We will answer with that profound thinker, Bishop Ullathorne: "Vanity may be known, as St. Thomas points out, by one or more of these three conditions. First, when a man vainly glories in what is either wholly or partly false, as when he claims for himself some good, or gift, or ability, that he has not; or some virtue that he does not possess, or some degree of excellence in these things, or in learning, skill, or accomplishment, or whatever else it may be, beyond that to which he can justly lay claim. Again, if he glories in things as one's own that belong to another, or that may have been received from another, and especially if one puts forward as one's own what has been received from God. To such St. Paul says: *What hast thou that thou hast not received, and if thou hast received, why doest thou glory, as if thou hadst not received.* (1) . . . . For in vanity a man seeks himself in the ever-shifting and uncertain opinions of other persons, and is always flitting, like the butterfly, from flower to flower, from one to another taking its color, like a chameleon, from what is nearest at the time. It is the ever-changing character of vanity, always under the influence of other person's opinions, and ever casting about for flattery, that so much weakens the prudence and judgment of the vain. It may be taken as a maxim that *where sound judgment and habitual tact is required, it should never be looked for where vanity is the predominant weakness.*" (2)

(1) *I. Cor., iv, 7.*

(2) *The Groundwork of the Christian Virtues, Lecture XIII., pp. 322, 327.*

St. Basil, the great teacher of monasticism, has some excellent observations on the subtle character of vanity, and hence we deem his words most opportune here. "Vainglory mingles its poison with honey," he justly observes, [1] "and hands the fraudful cup to the minds of men, that they may be filled with the vicious draught. For human praise is sweet to the inexperienced. When subject to vanity, they think that nothing can take them from sound judgment into error; yet their thoughts and judgments are so utterly perverted, that whatever the multitude admire they take to be most excellent. . . . . If they have little souls, or rash minds, they will be ready to accept anything whatever their wise judges of conduct think best, however evil it may be, and will be eager to do what may win their praises. This vanity not only destroys good but leads to evil. . . . . If some should praise us on the way, we need not take much notice of their praise, except to congratulate their sound judgment. But keep straight on with eyes raised to God, whose praise is always just. If others should dispraise this way, that is no reason for us to turn back, but a reason rather for compassionating their want of judgment and their mental darkness."

Moreover, the Christian teacher should not neglect the warning of Christ, who admonishes him thus: *Take heed that you do not your justice before men, that you may be seen by men, otherwise you shall not have a reward from your Father who is in heaven.* For blessed indeed are they who consume themselves

(1) *Constitutiones Monasticæ.*

in the service of God, without being esteemed or praised by men. Besides, we have the example of Jesus Christ, our glorious Model, who sacrificed Himself for us, His only desire being our salvation, and the glory of His heavenly Father. It should be our sole aim to love Him with a like love, and devote ourselves to His interests without seeking to flatter our vanity or vainglory.

For, "if in all things thou seek Jesus," writes Thomas à Kempis, "doubtless thou wilt find Jesus. But if thou seek thyself, thou wilt find thyself, but to thine own ruin. For a man does himself more harm if he seek not Jesus, than the whole world and all his enemies would be able to do him." (1)

Therefore, "shun this dangerous esteem of the judgment of men," counsels Father Bellécius, (2) "since it is the origin of the greater number of our afflictions. When we weary of our employment, grieve at having some charge imposed upon us, or complain of an insult or want of kindness or appreciation, we will find that the real secret of our chagrin and anxiety is the effect it may produce on the minds of others concerning us."

The surest remedy as well as the most effectual is to enter into ourselves and scrutinize our motives in earnest meditation before God. Then will that happy change be also effected in us, of which St. John Climachus speaks having taken place in souls who retired from the world and gave themselves up to the contemplation of the eternal truths. "I have seen," he pertinently writes, (3) "many and

*(1) Bk. II., c. vii, 3.*
*(2) Solid Virtue. (3) Scala Paradisi.*

various germs of virtues planted by those who live in the world, watered with vainglory as if from the pollution of a sewer, dug around by ostentation, and manured with human praise, which, when they were afterward transferred to the desert, where they were no longer seen by men of the world nor nourished with the miry waters of vainglory, have all suddenly dried up and withered away."

Thus we see it is foolish to place one's recompense in the esteem of superiors, or in human advantages, or in positions, honors, or the like, because it puts a low estimate on our toils and labors. But the humble Christian teacher who is animated by a spirit of faith, does all the good he can possibly accomplish without seeking his reward in the praises of men. And when such a teacher has done all that was commanded, he will still look upon himself as a useless and unprofitable servant, fearing that his services were overrated rather than not justly appreciated. His motto is in the words of Thomas à Kempis: *Love to be unknown and esteemed as nothing.* (1)

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## I.

### AN ILLUSTRATION OF ABNEGATION AND LOVE OF OBEDIENCE.

Seven years had already elapsed since Father Anchieta, the Jesuit, governed the Province of Brazil, amid harassing difficulties and incredible labors and

(1) *The Following of Christ, Book I., c. II., 3.*

fatigue. Hence, being no longer able to support so weighty a burden, and having become incapacitated on account of his daily increasing infirmities, he earnestly besought his superiors to relieve him from his onerous responsibility. His humility, moreover, caused him to consider himself as wholly incompetent for such an exalted position. The superiors honored his petition and, accordingly, appointed Father Martial, a man of great virtue and eminent talent, as his successor. The humility of the servant of God was at last satisfied, for he could now obey and allow himself to be guided in all things like a child. Now, it is a well-established fact, that men of eminent virtue and holiness view the state of obedience as one of tranquillity and happiness. Indeed the more capable they are to guide themselves and others, the greater appears to them the need of being personally directed and enlightened. And, hardly had Father Anchieta been removed from office, than he went, with the fervor and submission of a novice, to the new Provincial, and placed himself unreservedly at his disposal.

In consideration of his merit and his many infirmities, the provincial left him free to choose the house in whch he would prefer to live. But this privilege seemed to worry the good Father considerably, and he looked upon it as though some wrong had been perpetrated upon him.

When writing to his friend, Father Ignatius of Tolosa, he said to him: "The Father Provincial has left me the choice of my residence in the province. But, I can truly assure you, that this liberty is by no means pleasing to me; for as you are well aware,

men are bad judges of that which is for their own good. Now, after having placed myself in the hands of obedience for so many years, would it not be an outrageous error on my part, to commence exercising my own will, particularly at my advanced age and when my earthly course is nearly run?"

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## II.

### DIVINE WISDOM AND HUMAN WISDOM.

"There is a folly," writes Father Lallemant, [1] "which is, in the sight of the Lord, true wisdom. For to love poverty, humiliations, trials, and persecutions, is to be a fool in the estimation of the world. Nevertheless, the wisdom which is a gift of the Holy Spirit, consists precisely in this folly, and is in reality that which was practised by our Lord and His saints. Now, all that Jesus Christ had honored and sanctified by contact with His Divine Person during His mortal life, as poverty, abjection, suffering, and the Cross, was impregnated with a sweet odor and delicious savor. There are, however, few souls who are sufficiently enlightened to detect this odor and savor, because these are altogether supernatural. The saints have, nevertheless, searched for and sought after the odor of these perfumes, like a St. Ignatius who was delighted in being mocked; or a St. Francis of Assisi who passionately loved abjection and performed actions to draw ridicule upon himself; or a St. Dom-

*(1) P. Lallemant, S. J., Doctrine Spirituelle.*

inic who experienced greater pleasure in living at Carcasonne, where he was ordinarily ill-treated, than at Toulouse, where he was held in the highest esteem and honor.

"What desires had our Lord, or the Blessed Virgin, or the Apostles for the vain honors of the world or pleasures of life? *My meat,* said Jesus, *is to do the will of Him that sent me.* (1) The Apostles left the Council rejoicing that they had been deemed worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. St. Paul affirms that he was inundated with joy in the midst of his sufferings.

"To say that our Lord could have redeemed us without suffering, or could have merited for us what He did without dying the infamous death of the Cross, and that He chose nevertheless to die the cruel death for our salvation, is indeed folly according to human judgment. But what seemed folly in Jesus Christ, is unquestionably wiser than the wisdom of all mankind.

"How different are God's judgments from ours! Divine wisdom is accounted as folly by man, and human wisdom is but folly in the sight of God. It is essential for us, therefore, to determine to which of the two judgments we shall conform our conduct. We must abide by either the one or the other in all our actions.

"If we take delight in praise and honor, then we are simply fools. For in proportion as we take pleasure in being esteemed and flattered, so in the same proportion do we find the measure

(1) *St. John, iv, 34.*

of our folly; whereas, on the contrary, proportionately, as we love humiliation and the folly of the Cross, so likewise do we evince true wisdom."

And Father Surin justly observes: "Is it not an evidence of marked stupidity to be affected sensibly by nothing? Blessed are they who have so attained to that perfection as to remain insensible to everything, save what pertains to God's interests! O happy stupidity! For *a soul once consecrated to God should blush to love or desire aught else than His glory!*"

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## III.

### HUMBLE DISPOSITION OF FATHER HUBY.

Father Huby, of the Society of Jesus, was one of the most distinguished preachers of his time. His sanctity was equal to his talents and ability, and wherever he preached, his sermons produced abundant fruits of salvation. But his most eminent virtues were abnegation and humility. The following thought is an evidence of this affirmation: "Let each one ask of Thee, O Jesus, that which is most pleasing to him; but for me, I beg of Thee my entire annihilation! May my portion be to honor Thy Divine humiliations by mine! I will give way in everything and to all. I shall be content to be worsted in every argument, and shall take pleasure in seeing the views and plans of others preferred to mine. To do as much good as I possibly can and to appear as little as possible; to rejoice in being esteemed as a man

possessing neither wisdom, nor talents, nor power; to have effectively neither reputation nor authority; to love dependence; to be, indeed, so alone that I be not myself, but that God alone be with me; such is the life and death God demands of me.

"To appear on occasions of confusion, and to remain hidden when the opportunity comes to shine; that I may never avoid the former, but ever seek the latter, such do I desire to be my constant practice.

"Who and what am I? The last and most miserable of men. Thus filled with contempt for self and esteem for others, I shall act towards all with sincere cordiality and will show an equal charity toward all."

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## IV.

### A CHRISTIAN TEACHER SHOULD SACRIFICE HIS HONOR.

During the retreat at which Commandant Marceau assisted, the Reverend Father who gave out the subjects for meditation, related on one occasion that a Redemptorist had manifested an unwillingness to obey, alleging in excuse: *And my honor?* The query so aroused St. Liguori's indignation that he could only repeat for several days the words: *And my Honor?* The preacher, in addressing his brethren, added on this particular day: *We have no honor.*

These words produced an extraordinary effect on Marceau who had, since his consecration to God's

service, striven earnestly to crush self-love and to stifle in his heart that inordinate love of glory, which had been his cherished idols prior to his conversion. He frequently recalled this circumstance of the retreat, and more than once in his confidential conversations, when self-love would seek to gain ascendancy, he would smilingly repeat: *And my honor?*

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## V.

### CURÉ D'ARS ON SELF-DENIAL AND SUFFERING.

M. Vianney, like all the saints, was convinced that detachment is the only treasure of the heart; that to sacrifice is not to destroy, but to give life and liberty to the soul, by freeing it from the chains of finite things. Therefore, he always insisted much on death to self-love, and renunciation of our will.

"Our will," he said, "is the only thing that we have of our own, and we can make an offering of it to the good God. Therefore, we are assured that a single act of renunciation of our will is more pleasing to Him than a fast of thirty days.

"Every time that we can submit our own will to that of others, provided it be not against the law of God, we acquire great merits, which are known to God alone. What is it that makes the religious life so meritorious? It is the renunciation of the will at every moment; the continual death to all that has most life in us. Do you know, I have often thought that the life of a poor servant-girl, who

has no will but that of her mistress, if she knows how to profit by this submission, may be as pleasing to God as that of a religious who is always following his rule.

"I have known some beautiful souls in the world who had no will of their own, and who were quite dead to themselves. That is what the saints do. Look at good little St. Maurus, who had such power with God, and was so dear to his superior on account of his simplicity and obedience. The other religious were jealous of him, and the superior said to them: I will show you why I esteem that dear little brother so highly. He made the tour of the cells; they all had something to finish before they opened their doors. St. Maurus alone, who was copying the Holy Scriptures, instantly left his work to answer the call of St. Benedict.

"It is only the first step that is difficult in this way of abnegation. When once it is entered upon, we go straight forward; and when we have acquired this virtue, we have everything."

Speaking of the Cross, he said that it is distilled balm and exhaled sweetness; that the closer we embrace it and press it to our hearts, the more we make it give out the unction of which it is full; that it is the most learned book that can be read; that those who do not know this book are ignorant, even if they are acquainted with every other; that they alone are wise who love it, consult it, fathom it; that it is a school where all knowledge is to be found without weariness, and every sweetness without satiety.

"A house founded on the Cross," he said, "will fear neither wind, nor rain, nor storm. Trials show clearly how pleasing a work is to God." (1)

Thus, Christian teachers, will we find our joy and peace in the Cross, and the greater our love for it, the less will we long after the applause or appreciation of men.

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## VI.

### WHEN LABORING FOR GOD, CONTENTMENT FOLLOWS.

"If thou hadst a right spirit within thee," says Thomas à Kempis, (2) "and wert purified from earthly affections, all things would turn to thy good and to thy profit. For this reason do many things displease thee, and often trouble thee because thou art not as yet perfectly dead to thyself, nor separated from all earthly things."

St. Francis Xavier passed his life, now on sea, and now on land, and most frequently among barbarous peoples. Now, what possible tranquillity could we have had, or what untold annoyance would he not have experienced, were he to have sought his own interest and striven solely for empty honors or the conveniences of life? But as he sought God only, he found Him everywhere. Those who seek to do their will and who aim to please self only, are incapable of that happiness which can find a pleasure in everything. It happens not infrequently that we experi-

(1) *L'Abbé Monnin, Vie du Curé d'Ars.*
(2) *The Following of Christ, Book II., Ch. I, 8.*

ence, owing to our lack of scrutinizing our motive, a great repugnance to certain employments or duties, without being able to account for our dislike, for nature hides or disguises itself. Hence, to dispense ourselves from these duties we bring forward excuses which are nothing but vain pretexts, for the real cause is to be found in our self-love. Let us fathom the depth of our heart and we will there discover what it is that hinders us. We will undoubtedly realize that it is either the fear we apprehend that in such a position we will not be content, or that we will perhaps not receive sufficient honors, or that our selfish interest claims and rivets our attention elsewhere. *We are well off everywhere,* said Father Surin, *provided we seek not self; we need fear nothing or desire nothing, when we relish God and the things of God.*

"How happy and prudent is he who strives to be such now in this life, as he desires to be found at his death!

"For it will give a man a great confidence of dying happily, if he has a perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire of advancing in virtue, a love for discipline, the spirit of penance, a ready obedience, self-denial, and patience in bearing all adversities for the love of Christ." (1)

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Mother Anne de Beaumont, Superior of the first convent of the Visitation in Paris, although almost without money or any other material resources, suc-

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., ch. XXIII, 4.*

ceeded also in founding the second, placing her sole trust in God. Her success, however, rendered her the subject of some bitter attacks. The approval which she received from persons of distinction and high rank, and especially the marked affection of the two queens, Mary of Medici and Anne of Austria, who often spent whole hours in her company, either in the parlors or in her own room, gave rise to a burning jealousy. Indeed, the storm became so threatening at times that it seemed to involve the ruin of the convent.

St. Frances de Chantal who happened to be at Orleans, hastened to Paris. It was hoped that the presence of the holy Foundress might allay the storm and restore peace and tranquillity. But the hope was not realized. Perceiving that she could not appease the opposition, the great servant of God, who possessed the excellent quality of firmness and exercised it when occasion demanded, deemed the removal of Mother de Beaumont an imperative need. Accordingly, Mother de Chantal commanded her to leave Paris at once and proceed to Annecy.

Under these trying circumstances, Mother de Beaumont's virtue admirably stood the test. She made her immediate preparations, and endeavored to console the Sisters who were all in tears, and thanked Anne of Austria so humbly and so generously for the effort she had made to retain her in Paris, that this great Queen on leaving the parlor was forced to exclaim that she was after speaking to a saint.

Amid these charming acts of firmness and obedience, one word escaped Mother de Beaumont which

revealed her great delicacy of conscience. Whilst she strove to console one of the Sisters, she inadvertently remarked that she had been the victim of jealousy. She was so troubled thereat, that she immediately sent for her confessor who was no other than St. Vincent de Paul. This great master in the difficult art of guiding souls, told her that *God had permitted her to commit this fault, that she might crush the secret pride which she might have perhaps experienced on account of her firmness and obedience.* (1)

Mother de Beaumont asked for and obtained permission to follow the exercises of the novitiate. While there she edified all by her touching humility and unostentatious piety.

Thus it is that souls act who labor for God only, without being occupied with their personal interests.

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Souls, souls, O give me souls! exclaimed a great servant of God; I despise all else.

You must be ready, said Louis of Blois, to sacrifice everything for the salvation of souls.

Should our Lord ask me, said St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi, as he did St. Thomas: What recompense shall I give you for all you have written of Me? I would answer: *The salvation of souls.*

Our Lord appeared one day to St. John of the Cross, and said to him: "John, what reward shall I give you for all your labors?" "Lord," rejoined the

(1) *M. l'Abbé Bougaud, Vie de sainte Chantal.*

Saint, "nothing else in this life, save that I may be despised and be allowed to suffer always more for love of Thee."

To go to Madagascar, to labor, to suffer and die poor and unknown, without even seeing the fruit of my labors, wrote Clement Cathary. This is the dream of my life.

O Christian teachers! will we still persist in claiming that *our labors are not rightly appreciated?* Think often on this saying of Ovid: The prickly thorn often bears soft roses.

We should be perfectly convinced with Thomas à Kempis that "unless I put myself in this disposition, to be willing to be despised and forsaken by all creatures, and *to be esteemed as nothing at all,* I can not arrive at inward peace and strength, nor be spiritually enlightened, nor fully united to Christ."(1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III., Chapter XLI.*

# TENTH OBJECTION.

BETTER WORK IS ACHIEVED IN A MORE ADVANCED CLASS.

> "The man who seeks one thing in life, and but one,
> May hope to achieve it before life be done;
> But he who seeks all things, wherever he goes,
> Only reaps from the hopes which around him sows,
> A harvest of barren regrets."—*Owen Meredith.*

As nothing in human nature is so sensitive as vanity, observes Bishop Ullathorne, there is nothing that suffers more. It is easily wounded, often mortified, and frequently disappointed. Consequently, this objection, like the foregoing, springs from vanity. It is ambition that prompts us to seek a higher position, where we may shine before the world. Ambition has its root in vanity, which shows itself in presumption; and this is, as a serious writer asserts, an excess arising from over-estimating our own powers, and from attempting, in a conceited spirit, things that are above and beyond us, because God has not called us to them, nor given us light and strength for them. We may define ambition as an inordinate appetite for exercising power over others and for being honored by them. Now, this is precisely what the Christian teacher does when he claims that he can accomplish a greater good in a more advanced class. Most people would succeed in small things, affirms Longfellow, (1) if they were not troubled with greater ambitions. Hence, Carlyle assures us that no man is

(1) *Drift-Wood.*

born without ambitious worldly desires. (1) Cicero also held that the noblest spirit is most strongly attracted by the love of glory. But the Christian teacher who has noble aspirations founded on faith and humility, will not allow himself to be influenced by a motive which is based upon human judgments and glory. Indeed "to suffer the soul to be touched or influenced by the vain opinions of the world, is to expose her to deterioration."

There is, however, an ambition which every teacher should possess, and that is to do what his talents and ability can achieve within the sphere which obedience has assigned him. Then "the magnanimous character of humility is shown in the fortitude with which we persevere in holding ourselves down to that just and true position which belongs to us," says Ullathorne, "never advancing until God advances us, and that in spite and contempt of every natural impulse to false elation, or the assumption of place or character that does not belong to us." (2) How is this false elation or assumption brought about? Through self-love. Now, "this same self-love leads us to do certain things," wrote St. Francis de Sales to a religious, "because we choose them for ourselves, although we would not do them at another's bidding, or from mere obedience. If things are of our own originating we like them, but not when they come through other people. Self is ever seeking self, self-will and self-love; but if we were perfect in the love of God, we should prefer to obey, because in obedience there

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*(1) Essays, Schiller.*

*(2) The Groundwork of the Christian Virtues.*

is more of God and less of self." (1) Our nature inclines us to despise our lowly beginnings, once we have reached ambition's heights. This conduct in life belongs to a worldly career, but it is unworthy in a Christian teacher. For having chosen God for his Master, he should expect his reward from Him. What matters it to him whether or not his talents or ability are recognized! But it is of paramount importance that he fulfill his duties whatever may be his employment. For it is an act of sublime virtue and perfection to accept with a joyful heart and for the love of God, the most obscure employment, provided it be assigned by obedience. Our vanity and ambition would prompt us to seek the most honorable places, and hence we ought to take heed of St. Paul's admonition: *If any man think himself to be something whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.* (2) Though

> "Talents angel-bright,
> If wanting worth, are shining instruments
> In false ambition's hand, to finish faults
> Illustrious, and give infamy renown." (3)

Thus, it is obvious that talents and ability are excellent, aye, even necessary to the Christian teacher, but moral excellency ought to predominate, if he wish to do effective work. As the superiors are usually men of much experience and students of human nature, they always make it one of their principal studies to fit the right man to the right place. Now, if we think that they may possibly have overlooked our special aptitudes for the higher branches or the

*(1) Letters. (2) Galat., vi, 3. (3) Young, Night Thoughts.*

more advanced classes, we can and ought to remind them of it, and then allow them perfect liberty to act as they deem proper. And, should it happen that we are still left in our lowly position, we should be resigned, being assured that we are where we should be according to the order of God's Providence. To act thus would not be in violation of any principle of Christian perfection.

Again, the condition of a class may be such as to require our special services, because we possess those moral qualities and that tact to effect the regeneration that is needed, or else to give that stimulus to virtue, or perhaps even to advance the class intellectually. It is one of our failings to imagine that the greatest good can be achieved only in exalted positions or advanced classes. This is an error, particularly on the part of young teachers. Naturally, after having completed a brilliant course and being possessed also of natural gifts, they are ambitious that their light shine before the world. Now, unless we are thoroughly grounded in humility or in that magnanimous character of humility, as Ullathorne happily expresses it, we are very apt to allow ambition to prompt us and give us an exalted view of our ability. Shapespeare correctly affirms: "I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow." (1)

If we are possessed of such talents as our vainglory will insist on making us believe, then let us remember that the most skillful teacher should be entrusted with the education of children in the lower

*(1) Hamlet, Act II., Sc. ii.*

grades. For, it is obvious that being master of the subject-matter, he is best qualified to impart the rudiments of knowledge and direct the youthful mind in its perfect development. The skillful gardener does not allow the apprentice to handle young plants or to graft, because he is perfectly well aware that his own skill and knowledge as well as experience are requisite in aiding the tender plant or bud in its growth, and only when the young plant has passed certain stages of its development does he entrust its care to less practiced hands. Thus it is with the intellect and character of children. A teacher possessed of but little experience may be a success in an advanced class, because the young minds have attained to a certain degree of development, whereas the same teacher would be a complete failure in a primary class. From this we may infer the reason for retaining us in classes where there is less opportunity for displaying our talents, but where greater tact and ability are essential.

It is a remarkable fact that men of unquestionable ability often prefer to remain with beginners than to undertake the instruction of the more advanced. Since this is true, we ought to consider it an honor to be placed in the category with such men and to be privileged to teach the lower grades. Experience has afforded many striking examples of this truth in pedagogy. The future career of a child depends, in a measure, upon his first training. How many bright prospects are not blighted through the inefficiency of teachers! Nay, how many brilliant intellects are perhaps dwarfed in their development

through lack of skill and experience on the part of instructors! That we should have been destined to teach and form young minds ought to be our glory and sufficient for any ambition.

What guarantee have we that we could accomplish more good in an advanced class? Is it not presumption? "A man," says Alphonsus Rodriguez, "who would bind himself for life to the service of some distinguished person of rank, and who would consent to fill the lowliest functions, if necessary, would give a much greater proof of zeal and devotedness, than the one who would serve only on condition that he be placed in the highest position, which, in a manner, always brings with it its own reward. Moreover, the greater the aptitude of such a servant, the more would his master esteem him for his humility and conduct." Thus likewise is it with the Christian teacher.

"Of what value," remarks Bourdaloue, (1) "can I suppose those works to be with God, which are done, not for His sake, but to gratify my own vanity, and to attract the notice and esteem of men? Even if I do not go so far as formally to seek myself, but really think I have God in view, the merit of my actions will be destroyed, if I attempt to divide the glory of them with Him by taking pleasure in the commendations of men, and dwelling with complacency on what I achieve. *It is easy for pride to assume the mark of humility.*"

If it be our desire to serve God only in the highest positions, there is no great sacrifice on our part, much

*(1) Retraite Spirituelle.*

less does it evince any great zeal or devotedness in His service. If, on the contrary, we are ready to devote our whole life to the faithful performance of the lowliest functions, particularly those which are opposed to our vanity or pride, then we must rest assured that we are giving the strongest proof of our love of God and of our purity of intention.

Moreover, the greater our natural talents and ability, the greater should be the magnanimous character of our humility. If these are the thoughts and sentiments of the Christian teacher, it wil be a matter of indifference to him whether he teaches a primary class, or the senior class in the College. He is aware that he is serving the King of heaven, and in accordance with an old adage: "In the King's service there is nothing small." Therefore, he is content, because, in being allowed to serve, there is a great honor conferred upon him. For to serve Him is to reign forever.

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## I.

### LOVE OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES FOR CHILDREN.

The first public act of St. Francis de Sales in his Diocese was to establish Catechism classes. He exercised the function of Catechist himself, and so rigorously did he observe this self-imposed task that he never dispensed himself therefrom, unless the other duties of his episcopal position rendered this ministry morally impossible. Whenever this occurred,

he was very careful to select the most learned clergyman of his household to replace him. Indeed, not content with having the children present at these catechetical instructions, he left nothing undone to make them attractive even to adults.

Despite the Saint's disinterestedness, there were some who censured him for desiring the parishioners to attend. "What an idea of our Bishop," said they, "to place the learned on the same level with the ignorant, and to expect every one to become a child." The only answer the gentle Bishop vouchsafed to these critics was couched in the language of Scripture: *Unless you become as little children you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* (1)

Occasionally he would excite the piety and interest of the children by some ceremonies which he knew would be attractive to them. Accordingly, he appointed two Sundays of each year, when he would lead them in procession through the city, being accompanied by his priests, singing the litanies or else quietly reciting the rosary, with a pious and modest demeanor. Here again, some admired him exceedingly in the discharge of these humble functions, while others expressed their disapproval, saying: "Why should a Bishop condescend to occupy himself with such lowly functions and devote his time to the children and the poor?" Some one informed the holy prelate of their criticisms, but he simply replied in the words of Jesus Christ: *Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.* (2) He gave no further heed to their murmurs, continuing

(1) St. Matt., viii, 3. (2) St. Luke, xviii, 16.

in the processions regardless of what idle tongues had to say.

The children's hearts had been so completely won by such a manifestation of goodness and kindness, that whenever St. Francis de Sales appeared in the street, they came to him from every section of the city, taking up their positions on the right or left of the road, pressing so close to his person, as hardly to allow him a passage to pursue his way. All were so eager to receive his blessing or to kiss his hand or even his episcopal robe, and some would actually follow him on their knees, until they had obtained this special privilege.

As he advanced, this little band continually increased. When those who accompanied him would lose their patience, he forbade them to put the little ones away. "Suffer them to come," he would sweetly say, "they are my little people." And when the children would have lost sight of him, they would run home to acquaint their parents of the pleasure they had enjoyed, and repeat the kind words the gentle Prelate had addressed to them.

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## II.

### THE SUPERIOR'S COMMAND IS GOD'S WILL.

Doubtless, we may say that to do God's will in all things and at all times, is a great act of perfection. Moreover, it is equally clear that in complying with the superior's will and faithfully performing the

work thus assigned, God's will is accomplished, but this can also be better and more profitably done in a higher position or more advanced class. Any Christian teacher who holds such a view from selfish motives, prompted by vain ambition, unquestionably violates the principles of Christian perfection. Now, such a teacher would desire that God should condescend to do his bidding, rather than that he should submit to the Divine Will. This is undoubtedly arrogance and presumption. Assuredly, it does not belong to any man to dictate conditions to God and presume that Providence should adapt itself to his express wishes or preferences; but rather, it behooves him to follow implicitly and blindly the path that God has traced out for him, and to conform himself entirely to the ruling of His benign Providence. "He merits to be called Thy servant," said St. Augustine, "who asks not to command what he desires, but who strives simply to desire that which Thou ordainest." "Do not pray that your own will be done," counsels the saintly Abbot Nilus, (1) "but pray as you have been taught to pray, that God's will may be accomplished concerning you."

Let those words sink deep into our hearts and make them frequently the subject-matter of earnest converse with God. For they contain a most salutary counsel which will be especially useful as a preservative against sadness and discouragement, consequent upon the trials, disappointments, and tribulations of life. It is God's concern and not ours to choose the employment which we must discharge. Moreover, it

*(1) Treatise on Meditation.*

is not our privilege to determine in what or how we ought to serve Him. Are we then sincerely honest in our intention to serve and please God? Let us ask Him to guide us into the way of His Providence and not to allow us to follow our weak and blind judgment. And, if He should lead us through a steep, rugged, and thorny path whose very aspect terrifies us, but which we will nevertheless pursue with implicit confidence and entire resignation, we will indeed prove ourselves true followers of Jesus Christ, Who asked to do His Father's will, and not His own. No one can affirm that he has perfect conformity to the will of God, if he do not place himself unreservedly in His hands, that he may do whatever God will demand of him without the least semblance of opposition.

We have no more right to choose the function which we shall discharge in the house of God, than we have to select the trials and temptations which we will have to endure in this life. Consequently, we should receive with submission the Chalice of bitterness which the Lord sends us and consider it as the most effective to our salvation. We should, moreover, accept with joy whatever employment is entrusted to us by our superiors, and be convinced that the ministry which they shall assign us, will, more than any other, conduce to the interests of our eternal salvation.

"The masters of the spiritual life," says Alphonsus Rodriguez, "teach that there is still another means to attain a higher degree of perfection in this conformity to God's will. They assure us that we must

put ourselves into the hands of our heavenly Father with such confidence, that we will not experience even the least desire to ascertain what it may please Him to do with us. The greatest proof of confidence which a master can give his servant, is to entrust him with the care of his household without demanding of him an account of his stewardship." (1)

*Behold,* said Joseph, *my master hath delivered all things to me, and knowing not what he hath in his own house.* (2) Thus should we act, giving to God this strong testimony of our faith and love by remaining wholly indifferent as to what He may have destined for us, saying: "I am in good hands and that suffices for me. In this thought, I find peace and tranquillity, and I desire to know naught else."

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## III.

### MOTIVES FOR ESTEEMING PRIMARY CLASSES.

Viewed from the standard of reason, and more especially from that of Christian faith, the teacher in the lower grades is undeniably worthy of all esteem. Such a position is, assuredly, eminently consoling, important, and meritorious.

In the primary classes, the greater number of children are still innocent. It is to their teacher, as to their visible guardian angel, that the keeping of this precious treasure is confided. What a consolation for him to think that all these dear little in-

*(1) St. Luke, xxii, 42. (2) Gen., xxxix, 8.*

nocent souls are the special objects of God's predilection, for in them God has reflected His own image and likeness, as yet untarnished by sin!

Owing to his position, the Christian teacher of a primary class, shares with our Lord the care of the most estimable portion of His flock. Who does not recall the pleasure this good Master took in seeing Himself surrounded by little ones, whose candor and innocence charmed His Sacred Heart! Who does not remember how our Lord one day took one of these little ones, pressing him to His Heart, and saying to His Apostles: *Whosoever receiveth one of these little ones in my name, receiveth Me!* (1)

This unspeakable love of the Saviour for little ones was so well known, that mothers eagerly came to Him from every quarter and presented their children to Him, that He might receive them in His arms, lay His hands upon them, and bless them. One day the Apostles, thinking that He was inconvenienced by the great crowd that came to Him, undertook to rebuke the parents for importuning Him. Our Lord was displeased on account of their rudeness and said to them: *Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God.* (2)

The beginnings in all undertakings are of paramount importance. The traveler who goes astray at the beginning of his journey, gets farther from his term of destination in so far as he continues to advance. The least error in the foundation of an important edifice may result in serious conse-

(1) *St. Matt., xvii, 5; St. Mark ix, 36.*
(2) *St. Mark, x, 14.*

quences. A tree whose roots have been injured, will never produce good fruit. . . . . Thus the education commenced in the lowest grades has a very decisive effect, either for good or evil on the pupils, and may affect their whole career.

The Christian teacher of the primary or intermediary classes works, as it were, on new souls in which the obstacles to good have not yet attained to any serious consistency. Consequently, the instruction which he imparts, is a seed of virtue which he implants in their young and tender hearts, with the assurance that later on it will bear abundant fruit.

A field produces only the crop that was sown therein. Hence the first impression on the mind is, in a manner, the first foundation of grace and virtue which can never be entirely effaced.

When the true Christian teacher is animated by an enlightened zeal and governed by high aspirations of faith, he will find his ministry not only a source of many graces, but likewise an occasion of acquiring rich treasures of merit.

"The prayers of little children," said a saintly character, (1) "are very pleasing to God. The purity of their innocent hearts is a prayer incomparably more excellent than any our lips can pronounce." And the Prophet asks: *God is all-powerful and what can resist Him?* And we answer: *The prayer of children.* "The child who has preserved his baptismal innocence," declared the Curé d'Ars, "commands God, and He obeys."

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*(1) Monnin, Vie de Curé d'Ars.*

There is a wonderful intercessory power accorded to the prayers of innocent childhood, and it constitutes also a source of grace which hardly needs be pointed out to the Christian teacher. It is likewise an excellent means of exercising the Apostleship of prayer.

Let those, therefore, whom obedience retains in the lower grades learn how to appreciate the importance, the beauty, the attractiveness of their lowly function. For the more humble they appear in the eyes of nature, the more sublime are they when viewed from the standard of Christian faith.

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## IV.

### THE FAMOUS LHOMOND'S LOVE FOR THE LOWER GRADES.

The celebrated Abbé Lhomond entered the College d'Inville, near Paris, upon a scholarship. Having completed his collegiate course, he, through a deep sense of gratitude, became connected with the preparatory school where he had received his elementary education. Here he spent several years in teaching, when he was induced to take the office of Principal. On account of his great ability and rare talents, he was, shortly afterwards, called to a professorship in the College of Cardinal Lemoine, and here he resolved henceforth to devote himself exclusively to the education of children of the lower grades. Despite the great pressure that was brought to bear upon him to induce him to accept a position more in consonance with his talents and erudition, he per-

sisted in adhering to his resolution. Abbé Lhomond was proof against all these tempting offers, even continually refusing benefices and ecclesiastical dignities, *esteeming himself highly honored,* he affirmed, *to be called to implant the seeds of virtue in the hearts of the youngest children.*

Thus, did this eminent man who possessed such rare and varied knowledge, devote more than twenty years to teaching the elements of science, emulating the beautiful example of Gerson, the Chancellor of the University of Paris, who spent the last years of his life in teaching the Christian Doctrine to little children. After these twenty years, spent in the arduous task of teaching, Abbé Lhomond, having become professor emeritus, was retired, but he never lost sight of children who had ever been so dear to him. Keeping them and their interests in view, he passed the remaining years of his life in the preparation of many excellent text-books for the use of beginners. These works give unquestionable proof of genius and talent as well as of the experience which had been acquired in the difficult art of education.

Let the Christian teacher draw his own inference from this beautiful example, and let him treasure the words of the poet: If you wish to reach the highest, begin at the lowest.

"Some persons walk not sincerely before Me; but being led with a certain curiosity and pride, desire to know the hidden things of My Providence, and to understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation." (1)

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*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III., Chapter IV, 4.*

# ELEVENTH OBJECTION.

## THE PUPILS ARE ONLY OF THE POORER CLASS.

"The poor too often turn away unheard,
From hearts that shut against them with a sound
That will be heard in heaven."—*Longfellow.*

This objection is evidently based upon an improper motive, with an admixture of self-love and a lack of due appreciation of our sublime calling. Now, "motive is one of the essential elements of true righteousness," justly observes Father Didon in his admirable *Life of Jesus Christ*, "for it is the mainspring of our acts; if the motive is bad, it corrupts the act; if pure, it elevates it. Unless the motive is good, the best acts are but vices, they have only the outward show of good. The man who does them has the appearance of virtue, but in the sight of God he is only a hypocrite.

"Jesus requires of His disciples that their motives shall be pure and as exalted as their actions. The greatest sin and one of the most difficult to eradicate, is secret pride. Man loves himself more than he loves God; he ever seeks his own glory, and pursues it in his incurable vanity; even in his works of religion and piety, he desires to be seen, applauded, and extolled. Even those who profess holiness do not escape the subtle poison of self-glory, and in their case we meet with more refined forms of pride.

Moreover, "Jesus insists on the divine motive

which should govern our acts and consecrate our duties. His disciple should not look to the world, nor to men, nor to any created thing. No more egoism, nor self-love, no more vain joy and glory; the Father only and always: it is to Him alone we must look, and for whom we must act; He is hidden in our conscience, and in the depths of our being, but He sees, He hears, He rewards, He blesses."

"Contemplate our Lord," says St. Bonaventure,[1] "seated at a well, waiting for the return of His disciples with food, and see with what humility and condescension He speaks to the poor woman of Samaria. Contemplate His frugality; for the disciples were to return with food, but where was He to eat it? At the side of the well, or by the stream or fountain, and this we may presume was His custom, through poverty and simplicity of life. He had no exquisite dainties, no richly wrought vessels, no delicate wines, but had only pure water from fountain or rivulet."

Whose resemblance did Jesus Christ put on? For whom did He evince the greatest predilection? Was it for the rich Pharisees that He reserved His blessings, benefits, and miracles? We have merely to read the Gospels and we will see that He made Himself the poorest among the poor. His miracles were wrought for the benefit of the poor, the blind, the lame. His life, having been spent in their service, He ended His ministry on earth in the most abject poverty, being glad on Calvary to receive, as we learn from the Revelations of St. Bridget, a piece of linen

(1) *Meditationes Vitae Christi.*

as alms to gird His loins. O heaven! the Son of God, the Creator of angels and men, the King of heaven and earth and Sovereign Master of all they contain, reduces Himself to this extremity, to show us how He esteemed poverty and the poor; and we proud mortals complain that He had confided to our care His special friends, the poor! No wonder that even Lucan should have declared that poverty is shunned and persecuted all over the globe.

And, what was and is the conduct of His Spouse, the Church? She, at all times, esteemed the poor as her most precious treasures. Indeed, she did not hesitate to sell her gold and silver vessels to relieve the wants of the poor and distressed in times of urgent need, or pestilence, or raging epidemics. Who can read the touching development of the first Beatitude: *Blessed are the poor in spirit,* by Kenelm H. Digby, (1) and remain cold, unmoved or indifferent? It were well if the Christian teacher would refresh his memory and learn from the many established facts given therein what the Church did in all ages, but particularly during that much maligned and ill-understood period of the Middle Ages. Let him study carefully the origin of many of the colleges connected with the University of Paris and the Sorbonne itself. The same spirit gave rise to similar foundations in England, Spain, Germany, and Italy. Did not St. Peter Gonzales exchange the honors and pleasures of the court for the privilege of teaching Catechism to the poor children of the fishermen and sailors on the Spanish peninsula? Indeed, one might write a

*(1) Mores Catholici or The Ages of Faith, Vol. I.*

book upon the education which was given to the poor in the Middle Ages by the charity of the rich.

"How subtle is self-love," wrote Louis de Granada, "and how it seeks some utility for itself, even amidst noble affections!" Are the children of the poor so distasteful to us that we do not perceive in them the image of God? Surely, O Christian teachers, we can not be so insensible to their demands in the breaking of bread! What animated the zeal of a St. Patrick for the destitute of Ireland? What was the motive of St. Charles Borromeo in establishing Catechism classes for the poor children of his Archdiocese of Milan? Will you turn a deaf ear to the dictum of Petronius who affirmed that poverty is the sister of a sound mind? Did not that great genius of educational reforms, St. John Baptist de la Salle, thoroughly grasp the full intensity of this dictum? And what will we say of a St. Vincent de Paul, of a Dom Bosco, and of a Rosmini?

"We must be convinced," observes St. John Baptist de la Salle, (1) "that so long as we are attached to the practice of poverty and to all that may humble us, we will realize great fruit in souls. The angels of God will make known our worth. They will inspire parents to send us their children; by means of our instructions the hearts of these poor children will be touched, and most of them will become true Christians. If we do not bear a strong resemblance to the new-born Divine Infant, in our spirit of poverty and humility, we will be little known and our services will not be demanded. We will be neither loved

*(1) Meditations for Sundays and Festivals. On the Nativity, Vol. I.*

nor appreciated by the poor. We will never become their savior. Yet, this is the object of our ministry. We will fulfill this mission only in as far as we resemble Jesus in the stable of Bethlehem."

How noble, therefore, is the ministry of the Christian teacher! What a consoling, fruitful mission! Wherever there is a human being, remarks Seneca, there is an opportunity for a kindness. Aye, it is difficult to tell how much men's minds, said Cicero, are conciliated by kind manner and gentle speech. Can you conceive of a better opportunity than among the poor? Assuredly, the Christian teacher who is filled with a true apostolic zeal, will cheerfully sacrifice himself to console the poor, lift up their minds, and ennoble their hearts by kindness and gentle speech.

We should give ourselves up wholly to this noble work of charity and render thanks to God that our field of labor is with the poor, destitute, and neglected. To whom shall they go, if not to us! Who shall teach them to save their souls, if not the follower of Christ! Who can foretell what great scholars and saints shall come forth from the classes of poor children! Let us be content, therefore, with our ministry among the poor and esteem it as our special work of predilection. Let us banish all vain conceits and ambition, and cease all murmurings, take heed of the poet's words:

> "Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
> Which, at the first, are scarce found to distaste;
> But, with a little act upon the blood,
> Burn like the mines of sulphur."—*Shakespeare.*

## I.

### THE SOULS ONLY, OF THOSE ENTRUSTED TO OUR CARE, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

Among the many rules laid down by the saints and masters of the spiritual life for those having the care of souls, there is one principle of great importance and upon which they lay great stress, namely, to concentrate our whole attention on the soul without allowing ourselves to deviate therefrom in any manner whatever. There are some, affirms St. Bernard, who would, esteeming but the temporal advantages of nature or fortune, desire to have dealings only with such as are thus favored. Now, those who view things through the spirit of faith, value only the soul whose beauty is altogether interior, being entirely independent of the exterior graces given to the body. Moreover, it shines with greater or less brightness before God and in the eyes of faith, in proportion as it is more or less richly adorned by grace and virtue. The exterior beauty of the body should be looked upon as naught, unless it be accompanied by an interior beauty of soul. For the former we have in common with the brute and inanimate creatures, whereas the latter we enjoy specially in common with angelic spirits. Hence, according to the teaching of the saintly Abbot of Clairvaux, this is the beauty that should principally attract us. Consequently, we should esteem only the soul, the living image of God, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and member of Jesus Christ, who has clothed it, as it

were, with His Blood and redeemed it by His Death. And, when we consider that sin has deformed the soul, and through it, has annulled the Cross and the Passion of Jesus in its regard, our hearts should be rent with grief, sorrow, and compunction. Moreover, whatever refers to the body alone should carefully be eliminated from our thoughts and considerations, and be esteemed as naught else than a mere dunghill covered with snow, or as a whitened sepulchre, for it is, after all, nothing else. Nay, Gerson even desires that those in care of souls should act as though the material bodies had no existence, and that they had only dealings with pure spirits. The single eye rests only on souls. It should consider only their needs, and preclude every other thought, because it is wholly foreign to souls.

There are several reasons why this principle is of primary importance. The first reason is that our love for our neighbor, having its source in the motive of the purest charity and being founded exclusively on God Who is its sole motive and end, should preclude all earthly affections. The second reason is that in the exercise of our charity, this principle teaches that we must make no exception of persons, and fulfill our duties toward the poor as well as the rich, with an equal love and disinterestedness. The soul of the least of our brethren, or of the man most destitute of worldly goods, is of no less value in the sight of God, and cost Jesus not one drop less of His Precious Blood than did the soul of the greatest potentate. According to St. Ambrose, our Lord is a beautiful exemplification of this principle. In

the Gospels we find that He refused to enter the ruler's house who besought Him to come and cure his son, lest He should seem to manifest too much deference to the rich man. But how different His conduct when the centurion sent a messenger to apprise Him of his servant's illness and entreat our Lord to heal him! It is thus that He wishes to teach us that, when exercising our charitable ministry, condition and rank of life should altogether be set aside. We must but seek the souls to be saved, as the great Apostle counsels: *There is neither bond, nor free. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.* (1)

Moreover, if charity for our neighbor be what it should be, our predilection would be for the poor rather than for the rich, for children of lowly birth rather than those of noble parentage. First, this is what our Lord teaches us by His own example. Second, the poor recall to us in a more perfect manner than the rich, the image of our Divine Master, *who, being rich He became poor for your sakes, that through His poverty you might be rich.* (2) Third, we will have, possessing this disposition, a greater assurance that it is God alone Whom we seek in the discharge of our functions, and that it is for Him alone we labor.

Hence, we should not be foolishly annoyed or disconcerted whether the class assigned us be advanced or not, or the children thereof be rich or poor. We should have only one ambition, namely, to fulfill our duties faithfully and as perfectly as our feeble nature permits, and thus gain to Jesus Christ the souls that were entrusted to our loving care.

*(1) Gal., iii, 28. (2) II. Cor., viii, 9.*

## II.

### POOR PETER TEACHING THE POOR AND SICK.

"Imagine not, reader," writes Kenelm Digby, (1) "that I am indulging in any mere ideal picture, unsupported by facts; for be assured that the scene of many affecting episodes, worthy of being by poets sung, of many beautiful and sublime conversations, religious and philosophical, that would not be unworthy of the noblest pen, might with strict regard to historic truth be laid in the hospital of the Middle Ages. Modern writers of imaginary conversation need not go back to the Tusculan villa for a proper locality; they will find it nearer at hand, in the hospice of the poor.

"A great French physician, the Baron d'Alibert, speaks of a mysterious patient in the hospital of St. Louis, at Paris, who bore the name of Poor Peter, but whose real origin was known to no one, though it was evident from his language that he had received a finished education. He used to repeat by heart fragments of the Iliad and the Odyssey; and, having travelled over a great portion of the globe, it was his amusement to compare himself to Ulysses. His countenance was noble, his manner full of dignity, and the charm of his conversation attracted every one. He had been a soldier in his youth, and after his return from Africa, he used to live in the most obscure quarters of Paris, teaching arithmetic to poor children, and accepting hospitality wherever it

(1) *Mores Catholici, Vol. I.*

was offered him. His clothes were in tatters, and he always carried a pilgrim's staff.

"The hospital of St. Louis at that time was an asylum in which many men of letters had taken refuge. This poor Peter, attended by a dog, which never left his side, being received here, soon attracted general attention; and the Baron describes the interesting discourses which he used to deliver under the porches of the hospital. Among the sufferers whom he used to console were the translator of Bacon's works, a jurisconsult, some Neapolitan exiles, a poet, a painter, and some other artists. D'Alibert says that his countenance wore that venerable air which the habit of meditation gives, and that, after some days, he gained such an ascendancy over all the patients, that they used to regard him with sentiments of fear and respect. The courts of the hospital are planted with trees, and it was under their shade that this old stranger used to hold, as it were, his school, inspiring his fellow-sufferers with resignation and courage. No one was tired listening to him; and from about sunset, when his rhapsodies generally began, they used to remain seated on the grass till a late hour of the night.

"Once I glided in amongst them," says this physician, "and I shall never forget the scene which presented itself to me. The heavens were sown with stars, the moon cast its silver light over the buildings around; the old man happened to be more than usually inspired—I could have fancied myself under the porch of Athens. It was delightful to hear the high sentences of wisdom from the mouth of an old man

bowed down by the weight of years. A profound calm reigned in the hospital. The patients were permitted to remain listening to him, although the statutes required that they should retire to rest at determined hours. After fifteen months this venerable stranger died in the hospital, with all the sentiments of a devout Catholic. His memory remained in great veneration, and as often as any patient evinced extraordinary resignation and courage, the usual remark was, he is like Poor Peter."

## III.

### A FULL AND ENTIRE RESIGNATION OF OURSELVES, FOR OBTAINING FREEDOM OF HEART.

If we really desire to be happy in our ministry, we should place ourselves wholly into the hands of God. We should cherish no particular desires. We should be indifferent as to the place where we are sent, or to the class we have to teach, whether it be the primary or the advanced class, whether the children be poor or rich, dull or brilliant, repulsive or attractive. We should be calm amid all these varying vicissitudes. Let us study diligently these words of Thomas à Kempis: (1)

"*Christ.* Son, leave thyself and thou shalt find Me.

"Stand without choice, or any self-seeking, and thou shalt always gain.

"For greater grace shall always be added to thee,

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III., chap. xxxvii.*

when thou hast perfectly given up thyself without resuming thyself again.

"*Disciple.* Lord, how often shall I resign myself, and in what things shall I leave myself?

"*Christ.* Always, and at all times; as in little, so also in great: I make no exception, but will have thee to be found in all things divested of thyself.

"Otherwise thou canst not be mine, and I thine, unless thou be, both within and without, freed from all self-will.

"The sooner thou effectest this, the better will it be for thee; and the more fully and sincerely thou dost it, the more wilt thou please Me, and the more shalt thou gain.

"Some there are that resign themselves, but it is with some exception; for they do not trust wholly to God, and therefore are busy to provide for themselves. Some also at the first offer all; but afterwards being assaulted by temptation, return again to what they left; and therefore they make no progress in virtue.

"These shall not attain to the true liberty of a pure heart, nor to the grace of a delightful familiarity with Me, unless they first entirely resign themselves up, and offer themselves a daily sacrifice to Me: for, without this, divine union neither is, nor will be obtained.

"I have often said to thee, and I repeat it now again: forsake thyself, resign thyself, and thou shalt enjoy a great inward peace.

"Give all for all; seek nothing; call for nothing back; stand purely, and with a full confidence in Me, and thou shalt possess Me.

"Thou shalt be at liberty within thy own heart, and darkness shall not overwhelm thee.

"Aim only at this, pray for this, desire this, that thou mayest be divested of all self-seeking, and thus, naked, follow thy naked Jesus, that thou mayest die to thyself, and live eternally to Me.

"Then all vain imaginations shall vanish, all evil disturbances and superfluous cares.

"Then also immoderate fear shall leave thee, and inordinate love shall die."

## TWELFTH OBJECTION.

### THE PUPILS ARE TOO FEW FOR ME TO ACCOMPLISH MUCH GOOD.

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine:
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and th' action fine."—*Herbert.*

It is indeed singular how ingenious self-love is in the invention of plausible arguments in the attainment of its end. Seemingly, this objection is pressed with a flourish of zeal, whereas it is prompted by an inordinate zeal, encouraged by a secret pride. The Christian teacher who is actuated by the motive of seeking God alone and the salvation of souls, will unquestionably not presume to advance any such specious reasoning. Guided by the spirit of faith and burning with a true, enlightened zeal, he gives himself wholly to his work, and is not concerned whether the pupils be few or many. He has souls to save, to instruct in the way of salvation, and thereby advance God's honor and glory. This motive counteracts all adverse circumstances, and he, assisted by grace, is prepared to accomplish whatever good he can.

Moreover, the teacher is not supposed to create favorable conditions, but to accept them as they are offered by the eternal decree of God's Providence. Does the husbandman create the soil he is to cul-

tivate? Without murmuring he sets to work, taking the field as it is, assisting it if poor by proper fertilizers, and then awaits patiently the result of his honest labors. Now, the Christian teacher finds that his intellectual field is discouraging, but will he on that account repine and murmur? If he be the true apostolic man, such conditions will urge and emulate his zeal to still greater, more persistent efforts, planting and watering, leaving the increase and productiveness to God, the Sovereign Lord of all things. Consequently, nothing daunts, nothing discourages, nothing disconcerts, for he is assured that his motives are pure and disinterested, and hence God will not fail him in critical moments.

Now, if the pupils be few as is alleged, why are we so disheartened? We are doing God's will, and undoubtedly we will not claim that to be insignificant! Perhaps, we are precisely the teachers for the occasion, and therefore best fitted to attain the end. If the class be not numerous we have undeniably better opportunities to do more effective good, for then we can devote our talents and display our tact with greater efficiency, and certainly to better advantage, with more excellent results. May the limited number of pupils be possibly ascribed to us? If we are to blame, then why complain? Rather let us enter into ourselves and know ourselves that thus we may learn the cause of the evil and knowing it, take the means to remedy it. Perhaps we may be too harsh, severe, haughty, and governed by worldly principles, wholly at variance with our sublime ministry; or, perhaps, we may be incompetent, neglecting

to acquire the necessary knowledge or to give that thorough preparation to our lessons to insure interest and attention.

It is needless to affirm that under such conditions, the Christian teacher will not attain the end of his ministry, much less accomplish any good or achieve any real success. As moreover he has not acquired complete control over himself, his influence for good in the class-room may be greatly diminished. In fact, he may become a scandal and stumbling-block to the pupils. They are quick-witted and keen and notice his defects. They will chafe under his discipline; they may even resent and despise his occasional necessary rebukes. "Physician," they will say, "heal thyself." How can one expect students, guided and taught by such a teacher, to take pleasure in his teaching and to find delight in study? Who will blame them if they find causes for withdrawing from his undesirable, unwelcome tutelage? Let the teacher bear these hard facts and unpalatable, yet wholesome truths in mind, and he will certainly strive to root out the causes of his failure, he will cease his complaints, and what is most to the point, he will endeavor to make honorable amends.

Indeed, "our charity," says Alphonsus Rodriguez, "may and ought to groan and lament the little effective good we can accomplish; and withal, we should not become discouraged or discontented. Think you, said St. Augustine, that the Master of the Feast, mentioned in the Gospel, when he is apprised that his invitation is contemned, will upbraid the servants who tendered the invitation? Assuredly not;

their mission failed, but they are nevertheless good and faithful servants worthy of all commendation. Did they not fulfill the orders they had received? If the invitations were not honored, no blame attaches to them, but must be attributed wholly to those who were invited and upon them alone will fall the just anger of the Master. For the servants were by no means responsible that the banquet-hall remained empty, and they will be rewarded as liberally as if the invited guests had eagerly honored it.

"On the judgment-day the account of our stewardship will virtually be reduced to this single question, namely, whether we have done all in our power to effect the conversion of souls? That they may be actually converted, should therefore be the object of our most ardent desires, and if thus converted, should fill our hearts with an ineffable joy in the Holy Spirit. Withal, we must not forget that such a result is God's concern and not ours. It is our plain and simple duty to announce the word of God to those entrusted to our care. Now, as each one will be held responsible only for what concerns him personally, we shall have to render an account only as to the manner in which we have discharged the duties of our ministry, whilst the children will be judged as to the profit they may have drawn therefrom.

"The merit and goodness of our actions are not dependent upon, or measured by the effect produced in others. Here is applicable precisely the same rule as in meditation, where distraction and dryness but increase our merit, if, despite them, we persevere

therein. For what satisfaction, St. Gregory assures us, and consequently what a powerful motive of encouragement for the preacher who perceives his words gathered with a holy avidity by the immense crowds that everywhere flock to hear him and reap the fruits of salvation from his doctrine! But, on the contrary, what a painful trial, and hence, how disheartening to the apostolic man, who is forced to witness the sterility of his best efforts; to admit that his voice sounds only in the desert, and falls on ears deaf to the things of God! Now, if in spite of this sterility of his efforts, the preacher still continues to exhort with the same ardor as if all had profited by his instructions, and as if each sermon was crowned with a brilliant success, it would undeniably prove that his zeal was the purest and that he labored for God alone, without having the least thought of self in his laborious ministry.

"Now, it is with this purity of zeal, this abnegation, and disinterestedness that we should fulfill the functions of our holy ministry. Our aim should be, not the obtaining of a certain fruit, but rather the perfect fulfillment of our duty and the complete accomplishment of God's will, who does not actually demand aught else of us. If we view matters from this aspect, nothing can disturb us nor rob us of the tranquillity of our soul, nor of the calm of our mind, nor will we be discouraged or disheartened, as it so readily happens to those who are in pursuit of success."

"Then on! then on! where duty leads,
My course shall be onward still."—*Heber.*

TRUE ZEAL IS NOT DISCONCERTED BECAUSE IT CAN DO GOOD ONLY TO A FEW.

It occasionally happened that during the missions which St. Francis de Sales gave in Chablais, the sermons were scantily attended. This did not, however, prevent the apostolic man from displaying his wonted ardor and zeal, preaching as though he had a large, eager audience before him. At one time, there were but seven persons present, and some one suggested to him that it was hardly worth while to ascend the pulpit. "I owe them instruction," rejoined St. Francis; "it matters not whether the congregation be large or small. And even though there should be but one person to benefit by the instruction, I would still consider it an obligation to preach."

He preached, therefore, and took for subject of his discourse: The invocation of the saints and the honor paid to relics and images. While he was thus expounding the true doctrine of the church on this subject, and refuting the objections raised by heretics, one of his hearers, the procurator of Thonon, a recent convert, audibly began to lament and weep. St. Francis who, at that portion of his discourse, had said nothing calculated to move any one to tears, presuming that the man had taken suddenly ill, kindly inquired whether he could be of any assistance to him, and offered to suspend his instruction. "O, no, Father," answered the procurator, "continue your instruction, I pray you, for your discourse is the remedy I require." Hardly had the discourse ended, when the procurator came to the saint, and, throwing

himself upon his knees, exclaimed: "Father, to-day you have restored me to life; this day you have saved my soul! Blessed be the hour in which I heard you preach! It is worth an eternity to me!"

He then related to the audience, that a Protestant minister having persuaded him that the worship paid to images and relics by Catholics, was pure idolatry, he had pledged himself to renounce Catholicism for the second time on the following Thursday; but that hearing the bell announce the instruction he had come to the church. There I found only a few peasants gathered, and I said to myself: "If Francis preaches only for God, then he will give his instruction even though the number be small; but if he preaches only for his own glory, then he will disdain the insignificant audience gathered to hear him, and refuse to preach, thus giving a positive proof that he is no better than a mountebank, who seeks every opportunity to disseminate falsehood. I have been simply dumbfounded when I witnessed the zeal with which he preached, for I am convinced that he would not have discoursed with more eloquence and unction if the Church had been filled to the utmost of its capacity. Moreover, the instruction cleared away every vestige of doubt, leaving my mind convinced of the truth he had demonstrated."

He then declared frankly that he abhorred heartily the engagement he had made with the Protestant minister, and publicly proclaimed his perfect obedience and submission to the Roman Catholic Church.

The gentle and amiable prelate frequently related this incident to prove that the small number of hearers

does not and should not excuse from preaching the truths of our holy religion.

Consequently, whether the number of pupils be few or many, we should labor with the same earnestness and zeal, banish all thoughts of discouragement, and rest assured that God will bless our efforts in proportion as they are actuated by a pure and disinterested motive.

Heed likewise the truthful utterances of Thomas à Kempis:

"He is truly great, who is great in charity.

"He is truly great, who is little in his own eyes, and makes no account of the height of honor.

"He is truly prudent, who looks upon all earthly things as dung, that he may gain Christ.

"And he is truly learned indeed, who does the will of God, and renounces his own will." (1)

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*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., Chapter III., 6.*

## THIRTEENTH OBJECTION.

### PARENTS AND CHILDREN ARE UNGRATEFUL.

"I hate ingratitude more in man,
Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,
Or any taint of vice."—*Shakespeare.*

There is perhaps no failing in man which is more keenly felt and more vigorously reprobated than ingratitude. Considered then from a merely human standpoint, the teacher may have a just cause for complaining, for Ausonius affirms that earth produces nothing worse than an ungrateful man. And an ungrateful man, writes Seneca, is he who refuses to acknowledge a favor granted him, who makes little of it or even despises it, and who gives nothing in return. Our sensitive nature is shocked and our self-love is deeply wounded.

But viewed according to the light of faith, this objection gives evidence that our vanity and pride are offended, or that our motives are altogether too human. For it is natural to expect that our services be appreciated and our benefits acknowledged. And yet, the true Christian teacher looks not to man for his reward, and hence he labors with a pure love of God and disinterested zeal, striving to gain souls and to lead them to God. He is wholly indifferent to the praises or reproaches of man, and whether or not his services are requited. Reason assures him with Seneca that ingratitude is a shameful trait, since even the ungrateful complain of ingratitude.

Moreover, "evil being much more general than good," in the words of Father St. Jure, [1] "and virtue more rare than vice, there are also many more who are ungrateful than grateful. To be grateful, virtue is needed; to be ungrateful, self-love is all that is requisite. . . . . Also, there is no benefit so trifling that it assumes not importance and value when received by a truly grateful person. A reciprocal feeling of kindness at once springs up between the giver and the generous person who is the object of the kind action. On the other hand, there are natures so selfish, small, and niggardly that they give only with pain and reluctance. Such persons also are naturally ungrateful, since they are stinting in every thing, in thanks as in all else. As to the benefits bestowed on them, they receive them simply as their due, hence never dream of acknowledging them."

Now, if the teacher desires the child to be grateful, he should teach him how to be so, for that is one of the reasons why he is sent to school. Our experience is that children are generally good-hearted, and if they seemingly appear ungrateful, it is to be ascribed to ignorance rather than perverseness of nature. They must be taught to be grateful. This is an essential duty. Consequently, "to exercise gratitude becomingly," to cite the same author, "and to avoid the opposite vice, it is necessary to know the proper manner of giving and receiving pleasure, an acquirement of no small consequence. One can never hold with a good heart that which is not cheerfully given, but as

(1) *The Religious.*

constrained and extorted. 'A pleasure is due as it is made,' says Seneca, and for this reason it should not be bestowed negligently, but with affection and care. Let us give as we would wish to receive: so give voluntarily and promptly, give cheerfully and without bargaining."

The Christian teacher should, therefore, not murmur when he finds the children ignorant of the way of returning a benefit, or even if they do not give evidence of gratitude. For he labors not for man but for God, and God is not ungrateful. The less he receives from men the more he has the right to expect from Him who said: *Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me.* (1)

And now, can we say or presume that we ourselves have never been ungrateful to God for all His benefits? Is our gratitude what it should be? God ceases not to shower His graces upon us, even when we do not appreciate them. This thought should cause us to think and inspire us with compassion for those poor children of whom we are now complaining. Let us imitate the charming example of our Lord and surround them with greater solicitude, and let us make all due allowance for frail nature. For, if we continue to complain, it is an evident proof that we are laboring for self and our own pleasure and not for God.

When the ingratitude of man afflicts or annoys us, reflect how Jesus Christ was treated of whom it is

(1) *St. Matt., xxv, 40.*

written: *He went about doing good.* (1) "Christ," says Thomas à Kempis, "underwent a great want of temporal things; He frequently heard many complaints against Him; He meekly bore with confusion and reproaches; for His benefits, He received ingratitude; for His miracles, blasphemies; and for His heavenly doctrine, reproofs." (2)

If the Master was treated with such opprobrium, what may the disciple expect? And if the latter is ill-treated, what right has he to complain? Did not our Lord predict persecution for His Apostles?

We should purify and rectify our motives, seek only the glory of God, and we will be less annoyed and wounded by the ingratitude of our pupils or their parents. Let us remember our own conduct toward God, and this thought will help us to bear patiently with the ingratitude of men.

O how happy we would then be! How our labors would be blessed by God! What recompense we would merit, if we could, like all truly apostolic men, adopt this motto:

*Self-immolation be my sole recompense!*

Take heed also of these words of the poet:

> "Comfort, dear mother; God is much displeased
> That you take with unthankfulness his doing:
> In common worldly things 'tis called ungrateful." (3)

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*(1) Acts, x, 38. (2) Bk. III., c. xviii.*
*(3) Shakespeare, Richard III., Act. II.*

## I.

### THE INGRATITUDE OF CHILDREN SHOULD NOT PRECLUDE A TEACHER'S LOVE FOR THEM.

Bishop Dupanloup had undoubtedly great experience in the education of children. For years he was the Rector of a Preparatory Seminary. He is an acknowledged authority on educational matters, and, therefore, his opinion on the ingratitude of children should have some weight.

"Gratitude is a rare virtue, especially in children," observes this eminent authority. "Indeed, it is even so rare that ingratitude ceases to be the vice of the few. It may even be regarded as almost an ordinary failing of humanity. It is, at least, the common vice of all natures that lead a life of instinct.

"Hence, aware of its universality, I have never been inclined to reproach any special individual or individuals with this deplorable vice. We have merely to read the letters of children to their parents. Who has not been forcibly struck by the infrequency of words, expressive of respect and gratitude in these familiar communications! It is rare when a child expresses his gratitude to his parents in such letters. Can the teacher then naturally presume to be better treated?

"Gratitude, therefore, or that intelligent, appreciative and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits conferred or of services rendered, is not a virtue which we should expect from children. They will never give any evidence of it, unless it be at the end of their

course. . . . . Withal, I affirm that we must gain their friendship, and, if possible, also their esteem and admiration.

"For friendship, esteem, and admiration seem to be much more congenial and natural to child-nature than gratitude. They readily and freely admire what is great and generous. They will cheerfully and willingly love those who love them. And as to the annoyance and care which they cause us, it is altogether foreign to their youthful calculations. It never enters their minds. Moreover, we should not forget that the benefits for which we wish them to be grateful, annoy and disconcert them, whilst they constrain them to work and subject them to discipline. For, we must needs remember that the immense services which we render them are in their eyes a yoke or a species of captivity. Friendship alone with its tender offices, the friendship of their schoolmates and of their teachers, has the power of making this captivity and yoke bearable and light. Hence the reason that they become so amenable when they know and feel that they are loved. Their young hearts are very keen and sensible to this friendship. Every other thought is of no consequence to them.

"Lastly, I may add that despite their ingratitude and their other defects, children are attractive and lovable. I would almost say that they are the only lovable creatures on earth, for they alone are candid and open-hearted; even in their failings they are still true, natural, ingenuous, and sincere.

"Personally, I have loved children much, and it is an open secret that I still continue to love them.

Aye, they are my first, and they shall be my last, love on earth.

"And, I shall intentionally repeat: What is there on earth to love if we do not love them?"

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## II.

### THE TEACHER WHO TRULY LOVES HIS PUPILS, COMMANDS ORDINARILY THEIR GRATITUDE.

The illustrious Gerson, although Chancellor of the University of Paris, assumed the functions of Catechist in St. Paul's Church, Lyons. During one of his charming and familiar instructions, he thus expressed himself:

"My dear children, come to me and listen to the words of the tenderest of fathers, the dearest of friends. Come and do not be afraid or timid, for I come to you in the name of the Lord to bring you the words of salvation. Nay come to me in all confidence and you shall find nothing to repel you, for the pleasure I feel in speaking to you shall be reflected in my countenance. I will give you the milk of Christian Doctrine, and you shall, by your prayers, open for me the gates of heaven. You shall intercede in my behalf with your good guardian angels who ever behold the face of your heavenly Father.

"You will find favor for me with the Sacret Heart of Jesus who loved little ones so much and who also loves those who are interested in their welfare. Thus

we will receive our recompense in heaven: I by teaching you the way of salvation, and you by faithfully following my instructions. The tender bonds of charity will unite us to Jesus Christ on earth and will lead us to the ineffable joys reserved for us in our heavenly home. There we shall forever love one another, bless and glorify God, the tender and loving Father of little children. There we shall likewise realize for eternity those sweet words of the Saviour: *Suffer the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of God.*" (1)

Gerson, in his last illness, received a very touching proof of the gratitude of these children. He was apprised that these little ones, deprived of their friend and father, went every day to St. Paul's Church to pray for him. Here in this Church, where they had listened to so many simple and beautiful instructions, these dear children, on bended knees before the Blessed Sacrament, poured out their fervent prayers to the God of Love. Among other prayers they included this one which the Chancellor had taught them: *O God, My Creator, have mercy on the soul of Thy poor servant, John Gerson.*

This should induce us to love children and encourage us to do all the good we can. For by their prayers which are certainly all-powerful with God, they will repay us a hundredfold for all the care we have lavished upon them. Even should we not have the pleasure of witnessing their gratitude, we will have the great consolation at the hour of death of knowing how sweet and delightful it is to have directed and guided our pupils in the way of salvation.

(1) *St. Mark, x, 14.*

"O Christian teacher!" exclaims Father Crasset, "strive to merit this incomparable recompense by the ardor and purity of your zeal! What sweet consolations will be experienced at the moment of death by the religious when he beholds coming to his aid those souls whom he has helped to save! It is related of a good Franciscan that when dying, he saw himself surrounded by no less than sixty thousand souls whose eternal salvation he had been instrumental in securing during his life-time." (1)

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## III.

### THE LOVE OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES FOR HIS TEACHER.

Father Deage was the first teacher of St. Francis de Sales. This virtuous ecclesiastic followed Francis everywhere like a visible guardian angel. He loved him ardently. His vigilance was not relaxed even after Francis had become Bishop, and he apprised him of the least imperfection which he chanced to observe. It was his highest ambition to behold, in his pupil, a perfect man who should be honored and admired by all. He desired him moreover to be above all censure.

The Bishop, touched by such constant devotion and affection, neglected no opportunity to show his teacher respect and honor. He made him a canon of his cathedral, admitted him to his house and table,

(1) *Discours sur l'Instruction de la Jeunesse.*

and scrupulously and delicately attended to all his wants whether in health or sickness. And when Francis observed that his teacher was afflicted by a disease that would soon bring him to his grave, he watched over him to his last breath and lavished upon him a care which love alone could inspire. After his demise, the genial Prelate held the obsequies in the Cathedral and celebrated the Mass, ordering many more masses to be said for the repose of his teacher's soul throughout the diocese. This was not however sufficient to satisfy his love for him whom he loved so much.

He himself offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the repose of the soul of his dear teacher. M. Hamon in his Life of St. Francis de Sales assures us that the first time Francis offered the Mass for the dear departed, his sorrow was so intense that he could not repress his sighs and tears. And when Francis had come to the *Pater Noster,* he was obliged to interrupt it, owing to the great grief he experienced, and he continued it only amid a constant flow of tears.

Being alone in his room after the Mass, the Chaplain endeavored to console him. "Ah!" rejoined the Saint, "that dear soul is blessed where he is! Oh! he does not wish to be here! He is now in the arms of God's mercy and clemency; he reposes like another St. John on the loving breast of Jesus Christ. Do you desire to know the cause of shedding such abundant tears when I commenced the *Pater Noster?* It was the thought of that truly good man, for he was the first to teach me the *Pater Noster.*"

Thus it will be with many good pupils whom we instructed. Their minds and hearts will turn towards their zealous teachers who had first directed them to virtuous habits. Apply these truthful words of Quintilian: In almost everything, experience is more valuable than precept.

And Thomas à Kempis teaches wisely: "Thou wilt soon be deceived, if thou only regard the outward show of men.

"For if thou seek thy comfort and thy gain in others, thou wilt often meet with loss.

"If in all things thou seek Jesus, doubtless thou wilt find Jesus.

"But if thou seek thyself, thou wilt indeed find thyself, but to thine own ruin.

"For a man does himself more harm if he seek not Jesus, than the whole world and all his enemies would be able to do him." (1)

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*(1) The Following of Christ, Book II, Chapt. VII, 3.*

# FOURTEENTH OBJECTION.

## TEACHING ENDANGERS THE HEALTH.

"May be he is not well:
Infirmity does still neglect all office,
Whereto our health is bound."—*Shakespeare.*

There is no occupation or profession which can claim perfect immunity from the accidents of life whether proximate or remote. These are entirely beyond man's control. For we are, in a great measure, controlled or influenced by circumstances. This is a truism. A little accident in the affairs of life of some men may be productive of great and lasting results. Trifling circumstances have had the effect of converting the most ambitious and domineering men and women into the humble and meek monks or nuns; they have changed the course of empires and the destiny of nations. They may have been insignificant in themselves, but mighty in their consequences. Hence to attempt to control the accidents of life, as health or sickness and the like, is certainly bordering on presumption.

Moreover, this objection gives every evidence that the Christian teacher is not actuated by that heroic, self-sacrificing spirit which made martyrs and apostolic men. It likewise savors of indolence and love of ease, two serious faults springing from self-love. Now, the Christian teacher never dreams of self, and hence he has no thought about his health, leaving that

wholly to God's fatherly Providence. His life is to do, to spend and be spent in the saving of souls. He has learned the salutary lesson taught by the gentle Saviour who declared that *whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel shall save it.* (1) This was and is ever the guiding principle of all true Christian heroes, as the great Apostle of nations fully illustrates.

We read in Ecclesiasticus that *health of the soul in holiness of justice is better than all gold and silver. . . . . There is no pleasure above the joy of the heart. . . . . In all thy works be quick; and no infirmity shall come to thee.* (2) And again in St. Matthew: *Be not solicitous, therefore, saying: What shall we eat, what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathen seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.* (3) . . . *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows.* (4) St. Peter also teaches us this useful lesson: *Be you humbled, therefore, under the mighty hand of God; that He may exalt you in the time of visitation: casting all your solicitude upon Him; for He hath care of you.* (5)

St. Vincent de Paul, who so admirably practised this saving doctrine of Christ, has some pertinent

(1) St. Mark, viii, 35. (2) c. xxx, 15, 16; c. xxxi, 27.
(3) St. Matt., vi, 31, 32. (4) Ibid, c. x, 29, 30, 31.
(5) I. St. Peter, v, 6, 7.

words on this subject. To such as were too anxious for the preservation of their health and fearful that the missions might shorten their days, he answered: "But is it then a misfortune for him who travels in a foreign country, to advance in his way, and to approach his own shores? Is it a misfortune for the traveler to near his port? Is it a misfortune for the faithful soul to see and possess God? Lastly, is it a misfortune for missionaries to go so soon to enjoy the glory that their Divine Master has merited for them by His sufferings and death? What! are we afraid to see that come which we can not sufficiently desire, and which always comes too late?

"For that immoderate solicitude for preserving health, and that excessive fear of suffering some inconvenience, which we observe in some, which fixes all their attention on the care of a paltry life, are great hindrances to the service of God, and prevent them from freely following Jesus Christ. O my brethren, we are the disciples of this Divine Saviour, and yet He finds us bound in chains, as so many slaves! To what? To a little health . . . . . O, my Saviour! grant us the grace to divest ourselves of ourselves, make us, we beseech Thee, to hate ourselves, so that we may love Thee more perfectly. Thou who art the source of all perfection, and the mortal enemy of sensuality, give us the spirit of mortification and the grace always to resist self-love, the root of all sensuality." (1)

An implacable enemy to sensuality, he combated the very semblance of it. "There is no vice," said

(1) *M. Collet, Esprit de S. Vincent de Paul, c. xxvi.*

he, "more opposed to the spirit that should animate you, and better suited to make you lose a relish of your duties. A missionary should live as if he had no body, and fear neither heat nor cold, sickness nor hunger, nor any of the miseries of life. He should esteem himself happy to suffer something for Jesus Christ, and if he shuns troubles, labor and inconveniences, he is unworthy of his name, and can accomplish nothing. A small number of priests who have renounced themselves and their gratifications, will effect more than a number of others who fear nothing more than to enfeeble their health. The latter believe themselves wise. *Miserable is he who flies the cross, for he will find such heavy crosses that they will overwhelm him!*" (1)

Now, it is an undisputed fact that while some may be found who are altogether too fastidious regarding health, there are others who compromise it through a lack of reasonable care. In this category we may place those who possess a nervous temperament and an impetuous zeal. These are ordinarily of a fretful disposition and live always in dread of being backward in their work, whether in class or elsewhere. They are lacking in an enlightened zeal. Hence they undermine their health, for nothing is so detrimental to their nervous system as the fear of not having accomplished all the work which they imagine should have been done. The remedy for such characters is to remain perfectly calm, and to be satisfied with a reasonable amount of work. Nature must never be overworked. This is the other

1) *Ibid. c. xxvi.*

extreme and is equally to be condemned. They should be guided solely by prudence and obedience.

Again, with some there is a kind of restless activity, which may also spring from self-love. Thus they will never allow any one to replace them, even though nature demands a rest. This may, however, be prompted by a generous motive, but which does not on that account improve the condition of things. For these characters, ever attentive and considerate toward their fellow-religious, do not wish to impose any additional labor upon them, lest they be fatigued and perhaps sink under the burden. Such teachers are to be commended for their delicacy of feeling, but prudence and common sense would dictate to them to relinquish their post, when others are both willing and able to assist. This makes the burden light and agreeable, and the work is accomplished without detriment to health. Willing and cheerful hands experience no fatigue, for disinterested love prompts the act. The poet expresses this thought beautifully:

> "Could we forbear dispute, and practise love,
> We should agree, as angels do above." (1)

There are others again who presume on their health and consequently abuse it, because they have never known any illness. Hence they needlessly expose themselves, and if they chance to escape without paying the penalty for their rashness, they imagine themselves authorized to venture it at another time.

Now, let us steer clear of this two-fold danger: the temptation to be too fastidious and the impulse of a rash temperament. Let us observe rather the

(1) *Waller, Divine Love.*

golden mean relative to health, not however for any personal motive, but for God and the salvation of souls.

For the Christian teacher no longer lives for himself but for others. Consequently, the moment that he consecrated himself to God, he, that instant, relinquished all his rights and privileges, that is, not only his liberty, will, and intellect, but even his body and its health, nay, life itself. These forces are no longer at his command, for religion has unreservedly acquired their possession. The Congregation, like a loving mother, then claims her child by every right and title, and she henceforth guides and directs him, assigning him whatever function she deems proper. He should, therefore, be a docile instrument in her hands. The lawful superiors who are now the guardians of the child placed under their paternal care, will see that he is employed according to his strength and ability. Hence the Christian teacher should humbly bend to the yoke and cheerfully carry the burden placed upon his shoulders.

Now, the Christian teacher who is thoroughly imbued with these high aspirations of faith, will be indifferent as to his employment. It matters not whether he finds himself in the midst of a multiplicity of occupations or is relegated to a life of seeming inactivity. It matters not whether he may be called into active service or condemned to what may appear a useless employment. Lastly, it matters not whether he be allowed to enjoy in old age the repose he so justly merited by a life of fruitful labor or succumb to premature death. He has no other thought but

the will of God. That is his whole purpose and aim in life. His time is no longer his own; his very life belongs to another.

If the Christian teacher has acquired this holy indifference, he is as pliable in the hands of the heavenly Master as clay on the potter's wheel. Then will he, like another Stanislaus, smile at the approach of an expected death; or, raising himself on his couch, cry out with St. Martin: *O Lord, if I can still be useful, I do not refuse to work.*

Then, too, will the Christian teacher be ready to exclaim with Epictetus: "Dare look up to God, and say: Deal with me in the future as Thou wilt. I am of the same mind as thou art. I am Thine; I refuse nothing that pleases Thee; lead me where Thou wilt." And with Elizabeth Browning:

> "No earthly friend being near me, interpose
> No deathly angel 'twixt my face and Thine,
> But stoop Thyself to gather my life's rose,
> And smile away mortal to Divine."

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## I.

### ST. IGNATIUS' SPIRITUAL VIEW OF HEALTH.

"The saintly Founder urgently insisted," observes Alphonsus Rodriguez, "that all the members of his Society should acquire the spirit of holy indifference and perfect conformity to God's will. He taught them, therefore, to be indifferent as to the place and house in which they were to live. So eminent and perfect was to be this resignation that no

influence, not even the consideration of health, should sway them or induce them to desire a change. He affirms that it is our vocation and according to our Constitution to go wherever our superiors shall deem proper to send us, and where we will be able to procure and promote God's glory and labor advantageously for our neighbor's good. But, if it be found by experience that a certain climate should prove detrimental to the physical constitution of any member, then it devolves upon the superior to take cognizance of it. If the superior should judge it advisable to send him to a more congenial climate, where he is apt, in consequence, to effect a great good in the service of God and his neighbor, then he is simply complying through obedience. *Withal, it is not the function of the inferior thus afflicted or inconvenienced,* he insists, *to request his removal or to evince any inclination or desire for such a change, but he must remain content to leave the matter wholly and absolutely to the superior's judgment.*

"This prescription of our Constitution imposes upon us no difficult obligation. It is, doubtless, intended as a test of our spirit of self-abnegation. For, perceiving that our health is compromised and daily declining, we must nevertheless not only refrain from requesting a change of climate, but even repress every evidence of desire for such an amelioration of our condition. Hence, when it is question of going to missions for the purpose of converting the heathen or infidel, we are allowed to make known our desires, provided it be done with perfect submission, and

then leave it absolutely in the hands of our superior. But we do not, however, enjoy the same privilege concerning our health, for it is not permitted us either to demand this change of climate or to manifest the least desire therefor. The only right we have, under such conditions according to our Constitution, is to inform the superior. The inferior having thereby fulfilled his obligation, it now becomes the superior's concern. Should it happen then that the inferior be left where he is, although utterly incapable of accomplishing any good, he should look upon it as being more profitable for himself and for God's greater glory to remain. It is not the inferior's province to judge, but the superior's, who governs in God's place. The inferior should place himself completely at the superior's disposal, being fully assured that whatever is thus ordered concerning him is most conducive to God's service and his own individual good. How many people do we not find living in remote countries, whose climate may not be beneficial to their health, but who have nevertheless to remain there and work out their livelihood! How many cross the seas, or go to Constantinople, or to Africa, or to the Indies, and who risk not only their health, but even their life, merely on account of some business advantage or temporal gain! Should it then be astonishing that we who have consecrated ourselves unreservedly to God's service, should perform for love of Him and through obedience, what men of the world do for the sake of lucre or temporal interests?

"Suppose then that we should chance to imagine

that the physical indisposition which afflicts us is due to climate, that it would render us unavailable and that we would do much more in God's service elsewhere, let us bear in mind that it is better for us to remain where we are. We have, at least, the consolation of knowing, though unprofitable where we are, that we are acting conformably to God's will. This is infinitely better than to perform good by following our own inclinations and desires. We must conform ourselves, therefore, to the Divine Will, and remember that in God's inscrutable designs we are where we should be and where He wishes us to be."

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## II.

### THE HEROIC ST. LOUIS BERTRAND.

"From the moment of his ordination to the priesthood," writes the Rev. Stephen Bryne, (1) "the thought of martyrdom was constantly before him. The fire which charity enkindled in his soul, caused him to look upon all occasions of suffering and dying only as so many graces that it would be sinful to neglect. Hence he demanded nothing with so much ardor as to have the opportunity of shedding his blood for the sake of Him who gave His own life for man's salvation. His daily prayer while celebrating Mass was: *Give me, O Lord! to die for Thee, as Thou hast willed to die for Me!*

"As zeal for the salvation of souls, which has

(1) *Sketches of Illustrious Dominicans.*

always been a special mark of his character, now became stronger than ever, he desired, at the age of thirty to combine with his other labors that of the apostolic ministry. Efforts were made to thwart him in his design. His poor health, and even his special unfitness for the function of preaching, were strongly urged. The office in which he was doing so much to promote the best interests of his order, seemed to require his exclusive attention. Severe attacks of sickness also were not unusual; and if he did not succumb altogether to his infirmities it was attributed to his spirit of fervor, his courage, or, more likely, to a species of miracle. His voice was neither strong nor agreeable. All these circumstances conspired to impress upon his superiors and friends the idea, that instead of quickly spending himself in work beyond his powers, he ought rather to continue the work of forming good and holy men who would be able to bear the labors of the day and the fatigues of the apostolate. This was not the design of God in his regard, for the moment he put his hand to the work all that was thought wanting seemed to be abundantly supplied. . . . .

"A religious of his order, after having preached the Gospel several years in the West Indies, was at that time in Spain. He was preparing to return to the field of his labors, furnished with letters from his General, Father Vincent Justiniani, giving him ample powers to take with him any of the brethren willing to accompany him and likely to be useful on his arduous mission. Louis Bertrand looked upon it as a call of Providence directed to himself. With

delight he offered himself to the good Father. The remonstrances of his relations, the tears of his novices, the opposition of his Prior, and the whole community of Dominicans in Valencia, were of no avail. He answered the friends who most opposed his design by saying that, in making his religious profession, he belonged entirely and exclusively to Jesus Christ, whose interests alone from that moment ought to occupy his thoughts. Having received the blessing of his Prior, which the latter could not refuse without danger of opposing the will of God, Louis Bertrand departed from Valencia, on the first Sunday of Lent, 1562. . . . .

"In the course of his new career he added many austerities to his ordinary mortifications, such as lying on the bare ground, exposed not only to the unwholesome air but also to the annoyance of insects with which the country abounded. Either through disinterestedness, or love of suffering, or confidence in the care of Him who watches over every life, or by a combination of all these motives, he refused to receive from the Spaniards or Indians the assistance extended to missionaries. This often caused him to feel the sharp trials of hunger, thirst, and other inconveniences of the most wretched poverty. A life so thoroughly apostolic could not fail to inspire hope in the success of its mission; and that hope was more than realized.

"Everywhere he preached with much fruit, making great numbers of converts. The first grace for which our Saint prayed was that he might be understood by those to whom he came to announce

the word of God. But this was not the only favor that signalized his apostolate. The gifts of prophecy and miracles also contributed very much to increase the multitude of souls who were the seal and the happy effect of the power he had received from God. . . . .

"In the month of October, 1569, he arrived at Valencia, just seven years and six months after his departure thence to America. He had not come back to Spain to lead a life of ease, and therefore he shrank from no labor with which he was charged. His wonderful tact in the instruction of novices was fully recognized, and it was once more employed in the service of religion.

"But the principal occupation of our Saint after his return from America was the ministry of the word. In changing the scene of action he did not change his method. His labor and tears, his prayers and penances, were still the true sources of his success. With incredible zeal he fulfilled for twelve consecutive years all the functions of the apstolic life in several of the dioceses of Spain, and particularly in Valencia. Not even his special inclination for prayer and retirement, nor his infirmities of body, nor the occupations which seemed to require his constant presence in his community, could induce him to give up what he considered the essential duty of his vocation. Only God Himself, the omniscient Witness, could see the fruit of his ministry in the instruction of the ignorant, the conversion of sinners, and the extirpation of vice. . . . .

"May it please Divine Providence to raise up in

this our day in his holy Church, faithful imitators of his life and virtues; men filled with the same spirit of zeal and penance; apostles possessed of the same ardent love of God and of their neighbor; of the same invincible courage and persevering patience, of the same wonderful humility, which rendered him equally successful among Christians and the heathen; of all those virtues, in fine, which raised him to the highest degree of perfection, and finally crowned him with the honor of mankind and the glory of heaven!"

Hence, let the Christian teacher learn from the conduct of the heroic St. Louis Bertrand that which even the pagan philosopher Seneca realized: Let that please man which has pleased God.

And, with Thomas à Kempis, let him treasure up the truth of these pregnant words:

"Thou art miserable wherever thou art and which way soever thou turnest thyself, unless thou turn thyself to God.

"There is no man in the world without some trouble and affliction, though he be a king or a pope.

"Who is there that is most at ease? Doubtless he who is willing to suffer something for God's sake."(1)

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*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., Chapt. XXII, 1.*

# FIFTEENTH OBJECTION.

## A TEACHER IS EXPOSED TO CALUMNY, PERSECUTION, OR DISAGREEMENTS.

"Assailed by scandal and the tongue of strife,
His only answer was a blameless life;
And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's interest in his heart."—*Cowper.*

Sismondi has written nothing truer than when he affirmed that suffering is the surest means of making us truthful to ourselves. And crosses are of no use to us, writes Fénelon to a friend, but only in as much as we yield ourselves up to them, and forget ourselves. But there is nothing which nature dreads more than suffering and persecution. It is impossible to avoid them, for they turn up when least expected. They are a test of our humility. The true disciple of Christ, grounded as he is in humility, welcomes such crosses, trials, and contradictions. Now, "if the basis of humility fail," observes Bishop Ullathorne, (1) "all the virtues born of grace come to ruin. Faith loses its vitality, hope sinks into despondency, charity is destroyed, prudence loses her sight and her balance, justice is turned into injustice, fortitude is loosened from her strength, and temperance melts into dissipation. Take humility from the learned man, and losing his true position and just point of view, he will put imagination in the place of truth. Take it from the prudent man and

(1) *The Groundwork of the Christian Virtues.*

his wisdom will evaporate in conceit and vanity. Take it from the man in authority, and ambition will succeed to moderation, and he will overstep the lines of his just power. Take it from the devout man, and either to escape his interior desolation, he will break into open evil; or will give way to a wasting melancholy; or, whilst keeping the resemblance of his lost piety as a mask, his hypocrisy will make ravaging additions to his inward corruption."

*Son, when thou comest to the service of God,* says *Ecclesiasticus, stand in justice and in fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation.* (1) The Evangelist, St. John, recounts this admonition of the Saviour: *Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.* (2) And, *if you be reproached for the name of Christ,* affirms St. Peter, *you will be happy; for that which is of the honor, glory, and power of God, and that which is His Spirit, resteth upon you.* (3) *Take all that shall be brought unto thee,* counsels Ecclesiasticus, *and in thy sorrow endure, and in thy humiliation keep patience: for gold and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation.* (4) And the heroic St. Paul in writing to the *Galatians,* exclaimed: *God forbid that I should glory, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.* (5) Take heed likewise of the warning which our Lord gave, when he said: *He that taketh not up his cross, and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me.* (6)

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*(1) c. ii, 1. (2) c. xv, 20. (3) I. St. Peter, iv, 14.*
*(4) c. ii, 4, 5. (5) c. ii, 4, 5. (6) St. Matt., x, 38.*

But the Christian teacher who is governed by principles other than these enunciated, will naturally be sensitive and easily affected. Vainglory holds sway. Hence it is not at all difficult to see disobedience, boasting, hypocrisy, contention, obstinacy, discord, and the presumption of novelties, asserting themselves either separately or in combinations. St. Gregory calls them the seven vicious daughters born of vanity. The vainglorious is ever ready to parade his presumed excellence. Thus it is that he dreads calumny and persecution.

And the descent of these vices from vainglory or vanity is thus explained by St. Thomas: "The end of vainglory is to exhibit our own excellence, and we may add, to assert our own superiority. A man seeks this in two ways, either in words, and this is *boasting,* or by acts, which if true, but done to excite admiration, have always something new and unexpected in them, which is the *presumption of novelties;* but if these acts are false and deceptive, then it is *hypocrisy.*

"There is also an indirect way of exhibiting one's own excellence, by ostentatiously upholding one's equality with others, or one's superiority over them. A person may do this in any of four ways. The first regards his intelligence, and shows itself in *discord,* sticking to his own opinion, and refusing to give way, even after he sees that another is nearer the truth, or is altogether right, whilst he is in the wrong. The second regards the will and this is *obstinacy,* when a man will not give up his own will and way for the sake of peace and agreement with others. The

third regards speech, and this is *contention,* when a man clamorously disputes and contends for no justifiable reason, but only to satisfy his vanity. The fourth regards facts, and is *disobedience,* when, for any of the above motives, a person refuses to obey his superiors." (1)

"We must therefore bear the branding of vexation and calamity," writes this admirable teacher of spirituality elsewhere, "and feel that the hand of the Lord is upon us, and that we are stricken from Heaven, and crucified, though less by far than we deserve. From this we rise to greater reverence and awe of the majesty of God, and so take his visitations in good part, knowing them to come from His mercy and love. For, in short, spiritual prosperity is apt to blind the soul as well as temporal prosperity, and more, much more. For their inflation creeps in without observation, and injures more secretly, and as the soul is more noble by nature than all bodily things, she is more easily inflated by spiritual prosperity to forget her nothingness; whilst the old self-love and the sense of having been freed from our old iniquities serve the cause of Lucifer in fixing us in our own esteem."

When the Christian teacher enters seriously into himself by a careful introspection, he will find that there is yet much for him to attain in the way of perfection. Animated as he should be by high principles of Christian faith, he will not allow the shadows of things to rob him of his tranquillity of mind. Our Lord predicted persecutions for His followers, and

*(1) St. Thomas, SUM. ii, 2, q. 132, a. 5, quoted by Ullathorne.*

hence the Christian teacher, walking in His footsteps, can not expect to escape them. For be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, says Shakespeare in *Hamlet,* thou shalt not escape calumny. Even Cicero seems to have fully comprehended this truth when he said: Nothing is so swift as calumny; nothing so easily uttered; nothing more rapidly received; nothing more widely disseminated.

Is it because we believe ourselves exposed to calumny and persecution and discord that we imagine ourselves justified in complaining, or, perhaps, even desire to withdraw from our ministry? May it not be possible that our pretended fears are but a pretext to hide our infidelity? Were we not perhaps the indirect cause of these trials which now so keenly mortify and wound our self-love and vainglory? If so then *avoid foolish and unlearned questions; knowing,* as St. Paul wrote to Timothy, *that they beget strifes. But the servant of the Lord must not wrangle, but be gentle toward all men, fit to teach, patient.* (1) And to the *Philippians*: *Let nothing be done through contention nor by vainglory: but in humility, let each esteem others better than himself.* (2) *But if any man,* he tells the *Corinthians, seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor hath the Church of God.* (3) And again we read in *Proverbs*: *It is an honor for a man to separate himself from quarrels: but all fools are meddling with reproaches.* (4). . . . *Strive not against a man without cause, when he hath done thee no evil.* (5)

(1) II. Tim., 23, 24. (2) c. ii, 3. (3) I. Cor., xi, 16.
(4) c. xx, 3. (5) c iii, 30.

If such thoughts as these were present in our mind, they would banish all cowardly fear and prevent us from being fainthearted or tempted to look *back after having put our hands to the plow.*

Hence we should seriously reflect with Thomas à Kempis:

"Christ was also in this world despised by men, and in His greatest necessity forsaken by His acquaintances and friends in the midst of reproaches.

"Christ would suffer and be despised, and dost thou dare complain of any one?

"Christ had adversaries and backbiters, and wouldst thou have all to be thy friends and benefactors?

"Whence shall thy patience be crowned, if thou meet with no adversity?

"If thou wilt suffer no opposition, how wilt thou be a friend of Christ?

"Suffer with Christ and for Christ, if thou desirest to reign with Christ.

"If thou hadst once perfectly entered into the interior of Jesus, and experienced a little of His burning love, then wouldst thou not care at all for thy own inconvenience or convenience, but wouldst rather rejoice at reproach, because the love of Jesus makes a man despise himself." (1)

Thus, far from detaching us from our holy state, the thought of possible tribulations and persecutions should strengthen us in it.

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*(1) Book II., Chap. I., 5.*

## I.

### THE NOBLE EXAMPLE OF ST. PAUL AND ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH.

St. Paul was going from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. "And as we tarried there for some days," relates St. Luke in the *Acts,* "there came from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. Who when he was come to us, took Paul's girdle; and binding his own feet and hands, he said: Thus saith the Holy Ghost: The man whose girdle this is, the Jews shall bind in this manner in Jerusalem, and shall deliver him into the hands of the gentiles. Which when we heard, both we and they that were of that place, desired him that he would not go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered: *What do you mean weeping and afflicting my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but to die also in Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord* JESUS.

"And when we could not persuade him, we ceased, saying: The will of the Lord be done." (1)

St. Ignatius of Antioch, surnamed Theophorus, a word implying a divine or heavenly person, was a zealous convert and an intimate disciple of St. John the Evangelist. He was a perfect model of virtue. During the persecution of Domitian, St. Ignatius defended his flock by prayer, fasting, and daily preaching the word of God.

His inflamed desire of laying down his life for Christ, made him embrace his sufferings with

*(1) Acts, c. xxi, 10-14.*

great joy. Trajan, after a short examination of this valiant soldier of Christ, dictated the following sentence: It is our will that Ignatius, who saith that he carrieth the crucified man within himself, be bound and conducted to Rome, to be devoured there by wild beasts, for the entertainment of the people.

The holy martyr, hearing this sentence, cried out with joy: I thank Thee, O Lord, for vouchsafing to honor me with this token of perfect love for Thee, and to be bound with chains of iron, in imitation of Apostle Paul, for Thy sake. Having said this, and prayed for the Church, and recommended it with tears to God, he joyfully put on the chains, and was hurried away by a savage troop of soldiers to be conveyed to Rome.

He wrote to the faithful in Rome, to beg that they would not endeavor to obtain of God that the beasts might spare him, as they had several others; which might induce the people to release him, and so disappoint him of his crown. The ardor of Divine love which the Saint breathes throughout this letter, is as inflamed as the subject is extraordinary. In it he writes: "I earnestly wish for the wild beasts that are prepared for me, which I heartily desire may soon dispatch me; whom I will entice to devour me entirely and suddenly, and not serve me as they have done some whom they had been afraid to touch; but if they are unwilling to meddle with me, I will compel them to it. . . . . So that I have no desire after anything visible or invisible, that I may attain to Jesus Christ. Let fire, or the cross, or

the concourse of wild beasts, let cutting or tearing of the flesh, let breaking of bones, and cutting off of limbs, let the shattering in pieces of my whole body, and all the wicked torments of the devil come upon me, so I may but attain to Jesus Christ. All the compass of the earth and the kingdom of this world, will profit me nothing. It is better for me to die for the sake of Jesus Christ, than to rule unto the ends of the earth. . . . . Though I am alive at the writing of this, yet my desire is to die. My love is crucified. The fire that is within me does not crave any water; but being alive and springing within, says: Come to the Father. . . . . I desire to live no longer according to men; and this will be, if you are willing. Be, then, willing, that you may be accepted by God. Pray for me that I may possess God."

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## II.

### THE TRULY ZEALOUS MAN LOSES NOT HIS PEACE OF MIND WHEN HIS REPUTATION IS ATTACKED BY CALUMNY.

The eminent virtue of St. Francis de Sales did not escape the tongue of calumniators. It had to pass through the crucial test. But his admirable patience and resignation to God's will were proof against all attacks on his reputation. At no time did he lose calmness and tranquillity of heart, despite the baseness and atrocity of the calumnies.

"Providence," he gently observed, "is fully cognizant of the degree of reputation requisite for me to accomplish His work, and consequently, I desire neither more nor less than what seems sufficient for me according to His wise dispensation. Their censure or blame does not disconcert me in the least. And so far as the accusations are concerned, my conscience tells me that I am without reproach before God, and that knowledge is quite sufficient for me. There is no doubt that I would, for the sake of my ministry, be pleased to regain the good opinion of these gentlemen, but if I can not, I shall continue my labors with a good and bad reputation. Thus I shall have an opportunity of acquiring greater merit. . . . . I have placed all these raging storms into the hands of Providence, writes he to Madame de Chantal; whether they shall continue to blow, or whether they are appeased, I simply wish what God wishes: the calm or tempest are wholly indifferent to me. *Blessed are ye,* affirms our Lord, *when they shall revile you, and speak all that is evil against you, for My sake.*(1) If the world did not find fault with us we would not be true servants of God. I have commended this matter to the Blessed Virgin and I am resolved to leave it to her loving care. Nothing is gained by going against the waves, save foam. Hence, be not disquieted concerning me. If they must needs censure me, well and good. If I be free from blame in this matter, I may perhaps deserve it on other scores. Do you wish me to be the only one exempt from opprobrium? There is self-

(1) *St. Matt., v, 11.*

love in the desire of being loved by all and that everything should be turned to our glory."

"It is good for us," observes Thomas a Kempis, "to have sometimes troubles and adversities; for they make a man enter into himself, that he may know that he is in a state of banishment, and may not place his hopes in anything of this world.

"It is good that we sometimes suffer contradictions, and that men have an evil or imperfect opinion of us; even when we do and intend well.

"These things are often helps to humility, and defend us from vainglory.

"For then we better run to God our inward witness, when outwardly we are despised by men, and little credit is given us." (1)

It is in adversity that a man learns to know really what he is. *What doth he know,* asks *Ecclesiasticus, that hath not been tried?* (2) The man who prospers in everything is in great danger. It is much to be feared that his soul will be cast into a lethargic sleep, and that at the hour of his awakening, it will be said to him: *Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life.* (3) Sufferings are a grace of predilection. For they exercise us in virtue, furnish us new occasions of merit, and make us conformable to the Son of God of whom it is written: *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His Glory.* (4)

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*(1) Book I., xii. (2) c. xxxiv, 9. (3) St. Luke, xvi, 25.*
*(4) Ibid., xxiv, 26.*

## III.

### HOW ST. JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE SUFFERED INSULTS AND CONTEMPT.

"It must be confessed," writes Canon Blain, (1) "that according to the maxims of worldly prudence, St. J.-B. de la Salle was not of the worldly-wise. The world treated him as a fool; his own Bishop passed the same judgment upon him. For he looked upon him as a man whose mind had been weakened by an ill-regulated pietism, particularly when he heard him speak of renouncing his canonical dignity in favor of a stranger and to the disadvantage of his brother. And, when he saw him determined to give up all his possessions and throw himself into the hands of Providence, he pitied him and regarded him as being mentally deranged. The associates of our saintly Canon, as well as his friends and relatives and many citizens of Rheims held the same opinion, and viewed his acts of virtue and sacrifice as so many traits of folly, or at least, as striking evidences of imprudence.

"Everything in the future life of the servant of God was misconstrued by the world; everything appeared singular in connection with his project, his conduct, his manner of life, his habit, and that of the Brothers. It appeared equally ridiculous to the eyes of the prudent to see schoolmasters live up to the austerity, silence, and recollection of anchorets, and to witness the Canon himself teach in the primary

*(1) Spirit and Virtues of St. John Baptist de la Salle, chapt. X, ii.*

schools, clothed in the humble habit of the Brothers. According to their judgment, the master and his disciples both had urgent need of wise counsel to moderate their piety.

"These critics deemed the zeal of the Brothers not in harmony with wisdom. They esteemed their virtue as lacking that wise temperance which prudence gives, and which St. J.-B. de la Salle failed to notice, because he was an extremist in all things, and hence fell into the greatest excesses in matters of piety. If the servant of God was thus treated in his native city, he fared not much better in Paris and elsewhere. While praising his piety, they censured his conduct, and ascribed nearly all his acts to imprudence. Fortunately for him, there had been other saints who were similarly treated. Their virtue, which was above the ordinary level, exposed them to the criticism of those who did not possess the lofty wisdom critics condemned. St. J.-B. de La Salle was no exception thereto. His piety exposed him to the contradiction of many good men, and thus he became the object of jealousy, censure, and persecution. To them he was no better than an extremist, endowed with a mediocre intellect. This is all that they could allege against him, the sanctity of his life giving him immunity from other reproaches.

"When the conduct of the Founder of the Brothers is however weighed, free from passion, prejudice, or jealousy, it is obvious that the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and counsel dwelt in him, and that He who is the source of those gifts, communicated them to him.

"Now, the world spoke of him only with contempt, and pursued him with its railleries, slanders, fury, and persecution. All his actions were censured, condemned, and contradicted. All his projects were examined only to turn them into ridicule; and those who were less prejudiced toward him, imagined that they were conferring a favor upon him by heaping ridicule upon him. The profit which the holy priest derived from this general discredit, was to enter more intimately into the designs of God. Consequently, he availed himself of the erroneous judgments of the public for his own self-abasement; he desired to hide his heroic virtue under the mantle of humility, and to humble himself still more interiorly than the world lowered him exteriorly.

"He treasured contempt as flowers suited for wearing the crown of true humility, more precious than all the diadems of honor with which the world adorns the brows of princes. Thus did the holy priest seek the real knowledge of himself in what the world said of him. Hearing only what was disparaging to his honor he learned to despise himself, and to lay aside that good opinion, that secret and immoderate esteem, that baneful desire of exaltation, which we have inherited from Adam, and which even Baptism has not obliterated. The more he searched before God into what the world said of him, the greater reason he found to humble himself. Even under the blackest calumnies and the most crying impostures, he discovered a depth of truth, which obliged him to acknowledge that men, in speaking ill of him, did not say enough, and if they saw his

natural inclinations as he himself beheld, they would redouble their contempt."

Therefore let us often ask ourselves with Plautus: Do we never look at ourselves when we abuse others?

For, "in judging others, a man labors in vain, often errs, and easily sins; but in judging and looking into himself, he always labors with fruit.

"We frequently judge of a thing according as we have it at heart; for we easily lose true judgment through private affection." (1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., Chapt. XIV., 1.*

## SIXTEENTH OBJECTION.

### THE TEACHING OF CHILDREN IS DISTASTEFUL.

> "The thing which must be, must be for the best,
> God helps us to do our duty and not shrink,
> And trust His mercy humbly for the rest."
>
> —*Owen Meredith.*

"It happens sometimes," says St. Bernard, "that, after having vanquished our other enemies, we take up arms against ourselves, and are, by our own spirit impelled to pride, vanity, and impatience." Consequently, we need not be surprised at experiencing these feelings of weariness. "If we examine the cause of our sadness," intimates Rusbrocius, "we shall find it to be some hidden pride, some subtle ambition, some secret self-esteem, and always some deficiency of humility." Thus, it is evident that the root of the evil is to be found in pride or in one of her many offsprings. There is here a love of ease, a repugnance to combat inclinations, an unwillingness to carry the cross. It is nature opposed to grace. "Let thy first study be," counsels Trismegistus to his son, "to divest thyself of inordinate affection to thy body, this foundation and source of wickedness, this bond of corruption, this thick veil which blinds thee, this living death, this moving sepulchre, this domestic enemy, which hates thee in caressing thee, and loves thee in hating thee. It covers thee as a tent, lest thou should see the beauty of truth, the happiness which virtue would place

within thy reach, and the snares which the passions continually lay for thy destruction."

"Our nature most cunningly refers its affections, works, and all that it thinks and does," remarks Father Saint-Jure, (1) "not to the glory of God, but to its own gratification; while grace refers all to God and salvation. Nature would gladly live always in this miserable life, which is filled with troubles and bitterness, vice and defects, in darkness of the understanding, disorders of the will, extravagance of the imagination, the tyranny of the passions, and the bondage of the senses.

"Nature wishes to live in perfect liberty; she does not willingly submit to the rule of another; she rebels not only against equals and inferiors, but also against legitimate superiors; she can not bear to be conquered, and should all resistance prove ineffectual, she lays down her arms with a very bad grace. . . . Nature is prompt, rude, impetuous, and ardent in her desires."

Nature, says Thomas à Kempis, easily complains of want and of trouble. Nature labors for her own interest, and considers what gain she may reap from another. (2)

Now, "as effects are, according to philosophers, always proportionate to their cause, and the actions of a spiritual man, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, and performed on the Model of Christ, must of necessity be holy and excellent. The actions of the spiritual life are," observes Saint-Jure, "to love God for

*(1) The Spiritual Man.*
*(2) The Following of Christ, Book III, c. LIV, 15.*

His own sake, to prefer interior to exterior goods; to chastise the body, and keep it in subjection; to refuse what it desires, and impose what it does not wish for; and to desire contempt and opprobrium. The actions peculiar to the natural life are: to prefer self to God, to flatter the body, to seek self-interest, and to fly suffering and contempt."(1)

Hence, we would counsel with Shakespeare:

> "Find out the cause of this effect:
> Or, rather, say, the cause of this defect;
> For this effect defective, comes by cause."

And since we have the great honor to be Christian teachers, we undoubtedly desire to live conformably to our exalted ministry. But to attain that perfection, we should divest ourselves wholly of the failings and defects of the old man, and clothe ourselves with the virtues of the new. This is in harmony with the teaching of the Apostle of nations. In writing to the Colossians, he urges: *Stripping yourselves of the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new, him who is renewed unto knowledge, according to the image of Him who created him.*(2) This explicit doctrine leaves no room for doubt as to our conduct. We must, then, deny ourselves and combat the carnal man in us. We must needs overcome our natural as well as evil inclinations and listen attentively to grace. For we have need of our whole strength, and hence we should be upon our guard, lest we undermine it by following the suggestions of nature. We shall get weary of well-doing unless we are sustained by grace.

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*(1) The Spiritual Man. (2) c. iii, 9, 10.*

The distaste experienced for the education of children is indeed natural. This feeling may also result from physical causes. However, we must not give way to it. But should it arise from a lack of the true spirit of faith and disinterestedness, then we have reason to fear and tremble for the consequences, unless we strive to renew our spirit. Withal, there is nothing extraordinary in having such feelings, for they are consequent upon our frail nature. All the saints have more or less experienced this falling off of fervor. They, however, resisted these inclinations and persevered in good, despite interior dryness. Thus we should act. If we have no taste for teaching, let us combat this repugnance, particularly should it result from lack of a proper spirit or motive. Let us adopt this admirable motto from the sayings of St. Francis de Sales: *Let your charity be stronger than your inclinations.*

Now, it is not the question of a vocation, but of persevering. Since we are exercising the functions of our ministry, having been called thereto, God has unquestionably placed at our disposal all the requisite graces. For theologians teach that whenever God gives any one the grace of vocation, He likewise furnishes the means for the worthy attainment of its end. Hence our perseverance therein depends wholly upon our correspondence with His grace and and our generosity in the fulfillment of its duties.

For "much virtue and holiness," observes Father Crasset, "are demanded of him who would instruct youth. It is absolutely necessary to love children, if we desire to do them any good. Now to acquire

this virtue and these requisite good qualities, it is most essential that the Christian teacher enter upon his vocation from a motive of charity. God who is just and liberal, is under a special obligation, as it were, to endow those who embrace it with this purity of intention, with the necessary means to attain the perfection of their state, precisely as He furnishes the milk to the mother when her child is born." (1)

Evidently, God would not refuse the abundance of grace to the Christian teacher who, through pure and disinterested love, should labor so generously and earnestly to procure a new birth to so many children. Hence, being assured of this Divine assistance, the truly Christian teacher will redouble his zeal and feel stimulated to renewed efforts, despite the weariness and monotony experienced in his arduous ministry. For, he is fully conscious that every profession in life has its attendant difficulties and vexations. These are due in a great measure to the inconsistency of our nature. Hence, he will battle the more courageously, aware that he is not laboring alone. God, seeing his pure intention, blesses the work with abundant fruit unto salvation. He appreciates also the

> "Time, that returns not, errs not. Be content,
> Knowing this much: nor toil against the event
> Whereto time tends." (2)

He who wishes the end, must provide or procure the means. Now, God wishes the salvation of the

*(1) De l'Instruction de la Jeunesse.*
*(2) Owen Meredith, Licinius, Part IV.*

children entrusted to us by means of our instruction and example. But there is a principle in philosophy which declares that no one can give what he does not possess. Hence, if we are not holy, how can we impart holiness? Consequently, the greater our assurance is that God wishes our pupils to be holy, the greater also becomes the obligation upon us to sanctify ourselves. For it was to attain this eminent degree of perfection that He has bestowed upon us so many graces and has furnished us with so many means. We have, moreover, the certainty that His aid will never be wanting to us as long as we are engaged in His service in educating His little ones. Hence the Psalmist counsels us: *Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.*(1) And St. Paul writing to Timothy assures him: *The Lord will give thee in all things understanding.*(2)

Now, let us make the assumption that God is not obliged to provide us with the special graces requisite for our state or ministry. Then it follows that we must deserve His aid and protection by our fidelity in His service. Could we think of a better way to ensure the necessary helps than by manifesting our love toward the children? Did not our Lord declare that He would hold as done to Himself whatever we would do for them for His sake? Moreover, are we not assured of the wonderful intercessory power with God which the prayers of children possess? For their hearts are pure and innocent, consequently free from those stains which constitute the

(1) *Ps., LIV, 23.*
(2) *II. Tim., ii, 7.*

greatest obstacle to the efficacy of our own petitions. Hence, if any one can move the will of the Almighty, the prayer of sweet, innocent childhood will undoubtedly accomplish it. For, in Children He beholds the virtues most dear to His Heart, namely, humility, innocence, and simplicity. Thus, in whatever light we consider this objection, there is no reason for discouragement, weariness, or despondency. It is, therefore, a great delusion or temptation to desire to withdraw from our holy ministry, merely on account of the trouble or annoyance coming from educating the children, or because of a feeling of weariness or disgust, or perhaps from incompetency in teaching. Hence, let us address the children with the delight felt by the poet, when he exclaimed:

> "Hail, blooming Youth!
> May all your virtues with your years improve,
> Till in consummate worth you shine the pride
> Of these our days, and succeeding times
> A bright example." (1)

Consequently, "let us not say," Father Crasset admonishes, "that we have neither inclination nor the capacity for this kind of work. Since it is our vocation, we may rest assured that God's help will never be wanting to us. Go, He says, into my vineyard, and I will give you whatever is just and necessary; labor, teach, support, and correct. I will note whatever you do to these children, as if you did it to Myself. I will shower my graces and favors upon you in this life and will make you a partaker of my felicity in the next." (2)

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*(1) Somerville, The Chase, Book III.*
*(2) De l'Instruction de la Jeunesse.*

"To thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man." (1)

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## I.

### THOUGHTS OF FATHER JUDDE CALCULATED TO INSPIRE A LOVE FOR TEACHING AND TO DIRECT IN THE EXERCISE OF THAT FUNCTION.

I. By a general sacrifice, I must be ready to offer to God all my repugnances and aversions. Consequently, to be effective, I should begin with those which cost me the most to give up and those which I can not foster without exposing myself to commit many faults. Now, an aversion of this nature would be the natural repugnance to become a child with children. A victory over such repugnances is followed by great peace.

II. To inspire youth with true piety is not, after all, so easy of attainment as many seem to presume.

St. Jerome desires Laeta, a Roman lady and wife of Toxotius, to send her seven year old daughter, Paula, to Bethlehem to be instructed by him in Holy Scripture and trained to piety. Thus, despite his old age, he found pleasure in teaching piety. St. Gregory, even as Pope, did not disdain to teach children to sing the liturgical chants. And, we learn from the History of the Church, the appreciation which the saints of all ages, especially of later times, had for the ministry of teaching.

*(1) Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act. I.*

III. The annoyances and difficulties which we necessarily experience in our dealings with children, are most conducive in checking our impetuosity, impatience, and uneven temper. Possibly this may be the hidden cause why we have such an aversion for children, or dread to be with them.

IV. We know that every child has for its guardian angel one of the princes of the heavenly Court. But as the child can not see him and is too young to appreciate his services and listen to his inspirations, he has need of our intelligent co-operation and direction. Thus we can direct the children to be good and teach them to be virtuous.

V. Oh! that we could only realize the good we can accomplish among children! Never shall they forget the excellent lessons taught them in their childhood days! Their memories will treasure what has been said concerning prayer, and how they are to receive the sacraments with due preparation. Consequently, we should be extremely guarded against our weaknesses, for children are quick to observe and slow to forget. How many pupils have not been turned away from embracing the religious life, owing to the bad example of teachers! Alas! what confusion, shame, and desolation we shall feel at the awful judgment seat, if the Almighty shall have to upbraid and confront us with the loss of a single soul!

VI. We owe, perhaps, our own vocation to the good education and edifying example of a virtuous teacher. Consequently, let us, in our turn, do a similar service to our pupils, for God expects this much from our gratitude.

VII. Apostolic men risk their lives in China and in the wilds of unexplored Africa in search of semi-civilized peoples to bring them to the knowledge of their Creator. Here in our schools, heaven sends us little proselytes of the faith, and we refuse to labor for them! Doubtless, they are imperfect as to body and mind, but their souls are, nevertheless, attractive and beautiful. Faith teaches us that they have been redeemed by Jesus Christ; we have merely to lift the veil, and we will behold their souls empurpled with His blood. Never shall we notice in our pupils anything akin to the baseness, rudeness, or depravity, found among savages. Withal, the most degraded savage tribes are not, on that account, abandoned to their ignorance and its consequent vices. Where is, then, our faith and courage? Satan does not despise the most demoralized human beings, for he exerts his greatest cunning to effect their eternal ruin.

VIII. Possibly prior to our conversion or entrance into religion, we may have directly or indirectly contributed to the damnation of one or more souls. Hence, let us give back to God soul for soul. And if we can not restore those whom we have been unfortunate enough to snatch from Him, let us now, at least, make full reparation by saving others.

IX. Let us honestly examine our conduct. How do we serve God? Is our service loyal? Do we compensate Him for our negligence and imperfections by educating these children in a truly Christian manner? Do we carefully instill into their innocent hearts His holy fear and love? Let us say to Him:

O my God, even if I do not accomplish for Thy honor and glory all that Thou meritest, behold these little children whom I offer to Thee, for their purity and simplicity are acceptable in Thy sight! I will teach them to bless, love, and serve Thee: deign, O Lord, graciously to accept my offering.

X. The prayers that shall be offered in our behalf by those who have been the object of our tender solicitude and loving care, will undoubtedly obtain for us all kinds of graces and blessings.

Now, if a poor man's prayer for his benefactor finds favor with God, then assuredly will the prayer of a pupil for his teacher be of avail.

XI. There is no doubt that in guarding and instructing our pupils, we may, at times, be exposed to many distractions in our spiritual exercises. This is natural. And yet, is it possible to be better distracted or to a better advantage than when advancing the reign of Jesus Christ in the hearts of our pupils?

XII. Some are of the opinion that it is impossible to live in our active ministry without committing many faults. This is answered by a holy and enlightened man, thus: God never imposes a rule which it is impossible to keep.

For He who inspired the rule, will also give the grace requisite to live up to it, provided, however, that we do what is demanded of us. And I would add, that the faults which we commit will bear no proportion to the good we can effect and the merits that we can acquire in our arduous ministry.

We are, as it were, the visible guardian angels of our pupils. Now, that our ministry may be fruitful and efficacious, let us, in our conduct towards our pupils, strive to be imitators of their invisible guardian angels.

I. God sends those heavenly spirits upon their mission. Hence, it is neither by desire nor volition that they come upon earth; but they are ever ready to execute God's will.

II. While accomplishing their mission, they are never for a single instant deprived of the beatific vision. Thus we should ever walk in God's presence by our frequent, fervent aspirations of faith and love.

III. Whether a man be afflicted with a loathsome disease or retain his full manly strength and beauty, the ministry of the guardian angel is invariably the same. Consequently, let us be content with whatever it may please God's Providence to send us. For all men are equal in His sight. Undoubtedly, He could have created our pupils more perfect than they are, if He so willed it; but shall we have the presumption to murmur or complain, because of existing imperfections?

IV. The guardian angels hinder our faults. They warn us of them charitably and noiselessly, though persistently. They neither dispute with us nor abuse us. What a beautiful example of moderation!

V. The guardian angel of the poorest artisan, or the vilest churl, is as happy and content as if he were ministering to a monarch.

VI. Our guardian angels do not abandon us until we have breathed forth our last sigh, and not until there is not the faintest hope of doing us some good. What remarkable patience did they not manifest while we were languishing or wallowing in sin? Hence, let us be patient like them; let us hope against hope so long as the child is under our care. Perhaps everything will right itself at the last moment.

VII. Our guardian angels are unceasingly praying for us. Therefore, let us pray for those whose visible guardian angels we are. Consequently, we should frequently recommend to God the success of our labors, instructions, and corrections.

VIII. Guardian angels mutually assist one another for our good. Now, let us act in harmony with those who are aiding us. Indeed, we should often ask the good angels of those whom we are educating, to inspire them to do what our words frequently fail to effect.

IX. Purity itself is the bond which unites the angels to men. There is no intercourse save between spirit and soul. Consequently, let us love our pupils as the angels love them. Therefore, let us avoid every familiarity, all undue liberty, and repress all tendencies bordering on the sensual.

Hence, let us fulfill the duties of our ministry with constant fidelity, despite any repugnances we may feel, and our personal experience will soon convince us that success and consolation are ours, when we labor with devotedness and disinterestedness. If we act thus, then we may justly say with Plautus: If we have overcome our inclinations and have not been overcome by them, we have reason to rejoice.

"Thou must be willing, for the love of God, to suffer all things, namely, labors and sorrows, temptations and vexations, anxieties, necessities, sickness, injuries, detractions, reprehensions, h' iliations, confusions, corrections, and contempts.

"These things help to obtain virtue; these try a novice of Christ; these procure a heavenly crown."(1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III., Chapter XXXV., 2.*

## SEVENTEENTH OBJECTION.

### TO LIVE WITH FELLOW-RELIGIOUS IS TOO ANNOYING.

> "Give me that man
> That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
> In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
> As I do thee."—*Shakespeare.*

*Charity is patient, is kind,* writes St. Paul to the Corinthians. *Charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth: Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* (1) But the better to comprehend this noble and magnanimous teaching, it must be remembered that there is no man, whatever be his rank or condition, so perfect as to be free from all defects. Perfection is only to be found in heaven. Consequently, it were vain to expect that perfection which belongs to a nature and a condition other than human. Among men, the most perfect are those who have the least defects or failings. Indeed, human perfection, at best, is mingled with many miseries and imperfections. Who, then, is to be found without some stain? Therefore, *brethren, and if a man be overtaken in any fault,* St. Paul counsels the Galatians, *you, who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of mildness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* (2) The great Apostle fully understood the limits of our frail nature.

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*(1) I. Cor., xiii, 4-7. (2) c. VI, 1.*

Now, "since no man in this life," remarks Father Saint-Jure, "is entirely perfect, no man without something imperfect in body and soul, in the order of nature or of grace, we ought to conclude that there is no one who does not give others something to endure. To will that it should be otherwise, that man should be more perfect, would be to judge Divine Providence and resist His designs which it is our duty to follow and not to guide. If we wish to do right, says Seneca, we ought to follow, with a docile spirit and without murmur, God who is the source of all. What pleases this sovereign and infinite Wisdom, ought to please man."

And does not charity demand that we suffer with patience the defects of our neighbor? Is it not a truism that the more we love a person, the easier it will be to support his defects? Hence, it is that St. Paul thus admonishes the Galatians: *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ.* (1) What are these burdens? Evidently, the Apostle implies the bad humor, the passions, the unkind criticisms, the antipathy, the rude manners, and the sins of others. There is no doubt that we have to endure much from our neighbor, but it is equally true that he has much to suffer from our failings and imperfections. "To bear his defects with sweet patience and tranquillity, to support his coarse, wearisome manners, his spiritual and physical imperfections, by viewing all in the order of God and in the sweetness of Christian charity," is our proper conduct, but it demands many sacrifices. St.

(1) *c. vi, 2.*

Paul fully realized this, when he so strongly urged the Colossians to charity, that is, *bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another: even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do you also. But above all things, have charity which is the bond of perfection.* (1)

Moreover, the example of God who suffers with wonderful patience and ineffable sweetness the imperfections and sins of men, ought most unquestionably to induce us to do the same. If the Divine Majesty exercises such condescension toward poor fallen man, then assuredly ought we to endure with humility and long-suffering the shortcomings and imperfections of our equals and inferiors. If we have that pure, disinterested love, we will cheerfully bear with all. Our love will then be of that power and strength, mentioned in the Canticle of Canticles in this beautiful and expressive language: *Put me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm: for love is strong as death. . Many waters can not quench charity, neither can the floods drown it: if a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he shall despise it as nothing.* (2)

But what shall we say of the conduct of our Lord toward the Jews? "What equanimity and patience," observes St. Cyprian, "did not Jesus Christ evince in conversing with the Jews to break the hardness of the incredulous by earnest persuasion, in order to make them embrace the truths He preached, to surmount their ingratitude by the number of His benefits! How sweet His answers to those who con-

(1) c. iii, 13, 14. (2) c. viii, 6, 7.

tradicted Him! How patiently He endured the insolence of proud minds, ceding humbly to His persecutors! What constancy, until His last breath, to attract to Him those who had massacred the prophets, and who had always been rebellious to the will of God!"

"Though the Apostles were not guilty of as great crimes as Judas," remarks a writer, "yet they were of base extraction, fishermen for the most part, coarsely reared. There were many things in their manners and words, which from a physical and spiritual point of view were very difficult to be borne, yet our Lord never treated them harshly nor reproved them severely. He never said a word to them that could cause them any pain. He never appeared to think their conversation tedious, their manners rude and unpolished, or gave evidence that He experienced pain in enduring their defects. He supported them always with unalterable patience and sweetness. He spoke to them only with kindness and consideration. He consoled them with the tenderness of a mother, and admonished them of their defects with the greatest charity. He acted thus not only to His Apostles, but toward all men, supporting the defects of all with suavity and tenderness."

Consequently, if we have to suffer from our fellow-religious, we must not be unmindful that they, too, have to bear with our defects and idiosyncrasies. Mutual forbearance is the remedy. It is impossible to avoid all unpleasantness in our dealings with men, for our moods are ever varying and our dispositions are subject to constant changes. Withal, we can

contribute our share to lessen this friction by our condescension and meekness. Hence, one of the most effective means is not to be too much attached to our own will and opinion, but readily to yield when charity is in danger of being wounded by maintaining them. We never lose anything by such conduct, and our opinions need not necessarily change by our submission. But we have gained a decided victory over ourselves and have undoubtedly increased our merit. Therefore, things even useful and necessary ought to be ceded for the sake of peace and charity. To aid us in our honest endeavors to maintain this peace and concord, let us often seriously reflect on these sayings of Thomas à Kempis:

"What a man can not amend in himself or others, he must bear with patience till God ordain otherwise.

"Think, that perhaps it is better so for thy trial and patience, without which our merits are little worth.

"Thou must nevertheless, under such impressions, earnestly pray to God that He may vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them well.

"If any one, being once or twice admonished, does not comply, contend not with him, but commit all to God that His will may be done, and He may be honored in all His servants, who knows how to convert evil into good.

"Endeavor to be patient in supporting others' defects and infirmities, of what kind soever; because thou also hast many things which others must bear withal.

"If thou canst not make thyself such a one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another according to thy liking?

"We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we mend not our own defects.

"We would have others strictly corrected, but we are not willing to be corrected ourselves.

"The large liberty of others displeases us, and yet we would not be denied anything we ask for.

"We are willing that others should be bound up by laws, and we suffer not ourselves by any means to be restrained.

"Thus it is evident how seldom we weigh our neighbor in the same balance with ourselves.

"If all were perfect, what then should we have to suffer from others, for God's sake?

"But now God has so disposed things that we may learn to bear one another's burdens; for there is no man without defect; no man without his burden; no man sufficient for himself; no man wise enough for himself; but we must support one another, comfort one another, assist, instruct, and admonish one another.

"But the measure of each man's virtue is best seen in adversity. For occasions do not make a man frail, but show what he is." (1)

Doubtless, we are so susceptible, not through a motive of zeal for our neighbor, but rather on account of our self-love. Alas! an irritable and selfish love of self is the hidden cause of this bitter feeling toward our neighbor. True piety is meek and

*(1) The Following of Christ, Bk. I., Chapt. XVI.*

patient, because it is aware of its inconstancy. For he who feels his own weakness and laments it, is not easily annoyed or scandalized by the frailty of others. He is cognizant of the fact that all stand in need of support, indulgence, and mercy; therefore, he excuses, compassionates, and pardons, thus preserving peace in his own heart and charity with his neighbor.

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## I.

### PROVIDENTIAL REASONS FOR DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS AND DIVERGENCE OF CHARACTER.

That there are differences of opinions among men, nay, even among very religious men, is beyond all dispute. God in His infinite Wisdom makes use of these differences to exercise man in the practice of all the virtues. Hence, we find the elect mutually aiding and reciprocally assisting one another in the attainment of their personal sanctification. Naturally, by the mutual intercourse which must needs take place, there result, frequently, annoyances which, though wholly unintentional in their cause, are, nevertheless, often painful. *But before all things,* St. Peter counsels, *have a constant mutual charity among yourselves.* (1)

Consequently, our Lord hides from one man a part of the truth; to another He refuses comprehensive views or maturity of thought; He gives to one a lively disposition or a nervous temperament; while

(1) *I. St. Peter, iv, 8.*

He endows another with a serious, yet slow turn of mind. Now, it is obvious from these providential combinations, there must result a clashing of thoughts, or an opposition of wills, which are, however, less the fault of man than the imperfections of humanity. Evidently, the object of this great diversity of characters and gifts is that *all flesh may confess that all the glory and sanctity belong to God alone.* Happy the just man who depends on nothing human, but on God alone! For he indeed possesses a treasure of which no man can deprive him, and he is free with that true liberty to which Jesus Christ calls all men. St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, admirably expresses this truth, saying: *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.* (1)

Thus, contradictions and persecutions impoverish and destroy the weak, but unfailingly form saints. St. Alphonsus Liguori died in disgrace with the saintly and venerable Pius VI., who said concerning him: "If he be a saint, he is not a saint in all things."

And, we know from history that St. John of the Cross was imprisoned by the religious of his own order. But Rome, after his death, declared that the faults of which he had been accused, were not even venial, and accordingly, canonized him. St. Alphonsus Liguori was placed upon the altars by the successor of Pius VI. To-day St. John of the Cross and St. Alphonsus Liguori receive the veneration of the whole Catholic Church, and both seem to come forth from the tomb to proclaim to the Christian world these words of St. James: *Blessed is the man*

(1) *II. Cor., iii, 17.*

*that endureth temptation: for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life.* (1)

Therefore, ever preserve the greatest charity, for upon it depends domestic tranquillity, religious discipline, the individual advancement in virtue, and the general good of the community. If the members of the religious community are always mutually considerate and forbearing, they will be blessed with peace and happiness. What a glorious example of concord and unity they set before the pupils and their parents! What a power is theirs because of this mutual support, and what a powerful stimulus to the practice of magnanimous virtue! Thus united in the common and mutual bond of charity, there will be no difficulty in serving their neighbor, in advancing God's honor and glory, and in attaining their own perfection. But where this fraternal bond and union do not exist, where charity does not abide, life is unbearable, a veritable torture, aye, a foretaste of hell.

Hence, knowing that differences of opinions and diversity of character are intended in God's inscrutable designs for our sanctification, let us carefully avoid in word and deed, nay even in thought, whatever may offend or wound our neighbor. Therefore, let us always be kind and affable, and ever docile to our superiors, particularly when they admonish, counsel, or direct us. Let us be models of that perfect condescension which characterizes the strong and virtuous man, and let us show ourselves great, magnanimous souls who are ever ready to sacrifice pleasure for our neighbor's welfare and happiness.

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(1) c. i. 12.

## II.

### COUNSELS OF FATHER JUDDE TO A YOUNG TEACHER.

Among the lesser virtues so essential to the young Christian teacher, civility and candor deserve special cultivation. Genuine civility is a great help to charity. Hence, an attentive study of cultured manners is not to be despised. Indeed, it is difficult to understand how a young teacher can deem himself dispensed therefrom. Consequently, beware of a certain haste to speak, to decide, or to contradict. There are many things of which you are still ignorant, owing to your youth and inexperience. Again, even if you have acquired a thorough knowledge of many subjects, there are unquestionably many others which you know but imperfectly, and, therefore, you should learn them before venturing to teach. Youth should be modest, timid rather than bold. You are not an angel, neither shall you have to live with angels; hence know that you have faults like other men. Consequently, mould your conduct on that of your worthy brethren, rather than wish to force them to imitate you. Above all, never undertake to reform others, for you will never succeed; but labor earnestly to reform yourself, because in this reformation you may, at least, attain success. Moreover, do not lose sight of this important principle of conduct: never interfere in other people's business, even when you imagine, rightly or wrongly, that they are meddling with your concerns. Therefore, be not curious to know all that transpires, but strive to live in the house without seeking to attract attention and without bustling. Be

neither a suspicious nor a doubting character; beware of carrying tales about this one or that one to those whom you call your friends and confidants. Be particularly slow to credit gossip. It is advisable even to distrust your own judgment on certain occasions, for if you put faith in mere conjectures, you are apt to lose your peace of mind and conscience.

Consequently, let your conduct be uniform, affable, and mild. Never evince a marked preference for any one, and never give any one cause to think that you esteem him but little, or that you would not be ever ready to tender him a service. Never indulge in raillery or in cynical criticism.

Moreover, never be wanting in the respect due to old age. If God should grant you length of years, you will then know to your own cost, how keenly an old man feels the lack of attention in which young persons are so often apt to indulge. Besides, God in His justice would then oblige you to pay a hundredfold for faults of a like nature committed in your youth.

Again, do not despise the company, or the conversation of those advanced in years. If they are sick, visit them often; speak to them kindly and with respect and confidence, and be glad to render them any little service in your power. Thus you will be performing a great act of charity and one very acceptable to God.

And as to your intercourse with your equals, let true politeness and real charity govern all your words and acts. There is nothing more conducive to harmony than a perfect understanding with all your

brethren. Make it a principle never to speak ill of any of them, seeking always to hide rather than to expose their failings, especially in the presence of pupils. No pupil will ever dare speak harshly or disrespectfully of your fellow-religious, if he is aware that you are in perfect sympathy with him, and that you will resent any insult to your colleague, even with greater promptness and severity than if it had been offered to yourself. And should God have endowed you with a mind superior to that of your companion, be all the more modest, humble, and considerate on that account, for he, perhaps, already feels his inferiority without your accentuating it. But if, on the contrary, you are inferior to him in mental endowments, repress all jealousy and strive to attain his level by persevering study, serious meditation, and fervent prayer. This is the only emulation sanctioned by fraternal charity.

To these counsels, I should perhaps add a few observations concerning the outward conduct of the Christian teacher as well as the thousand and one little precautions of refined manners, he should observe in his relations toward the pupils and parents. Now, it must be borne in mind that the outward forms of manners and conduct have a great influence on the intercourse of man with man. The world rarely pauses to examine the real worth of the individual. It is pleased with him who seems to possess the requisite polish and culture of a refined education.

Evidently, this is correct up to a certain point. It is a natural consequence of the weakness of our minds. Imagine for a moment how exceedingly em-

barrassing it would be if we could not enter into relations with a man, until we had first been able to judge his inmost soul! Daily life, under such conditions, would simply become an impossibility. The consequence is that we are often obliged to content ourselves with mere external forms of conduct, and take it for granted that the words and actions of a man are a true index of his feelings. If this be deemed essential in regard to persons of mature age and sound judgment, then it becomes doubly necessary when the teacher is before young and imitative children. Therefore, the young Christian teacher can not be too prudent in his right conduct.

But I shall not attempt to enter into minute details, for it is impossible to formulate general laws which would be applicable in all cases. Indeed, no code of laws can be established for an art which depends, in a great measure, on the natural aptitudes and constitution of the individual teacher. Thus, a teacher endowed with an impetuous temperament, must take refuge in a cold, impassable reserve, if he wish to be successful and avoid defects consequent upon such a temperament. Now, this impassiveness might be a fault in another teacher, and hence would be altogether unsuitable and impracticable.

Again, here is a teacher who naturally preserves his dignity even under strong emotions. These are only observable in his tone of voice or facial expressions, and he possesses the power of controlling and intimidating. Such a teacher always speaks with authority, and his orders are readily, respectfully obeyed.

Furthermore, there are others whose very words command attention and bespeak great tenderness. In listening to such a teacher, the children are invariably moved. These teachers control their pupils by the gentle art of persuasion and by friendship. There are, however, characters who always appear vulgar whenever they attempt the guise of friendliness. Now, unless they wish to forfeit the respect of their pupils, they should not wish to appear good and kind, but must be content to show themselves ever just.

Moreover, the different shades of character are almost infinite. Hence, the knowledge of ourselves, aided by the wise counsels of a superior or a prudent friend, can alone be our guide in this difficult art of teaching and the proper external conduct of life. All that I can say is, do not flatter yourself by attributing anything to yourself, which you do not possess. An error of this kind would expose you to adopt an affected outward behavior, which would not escape the quick wit of your pupils, who would consequently regard you as nothing better than a fop. It is always wise and prudent to regulate your conduct in consonance with the admirable rules of modesty.

Hence think well on the truth contained in these pregnant words of Seneca: Live with men, as if God saw you; converse with God, as if men heard you.

## EIGHTEENTH OBJECTION.

### TEACHING IS THE CAUSE OF MANY DISTRACTIONS AND NUMEROUS FAULTS.

> "*More bitter far than all*
> It was to know that Love could change and die!—
> Hush! for the ages call,
> 'The Love of God lives through eternity,
> And conquers all!' "—*Adelaide Proctor.*

"God would have you wise," writes Fénelon in one of his Letters, "not with your own wisdom, but with His. He will make you wise, not by causing you to make many reflections, but on the contrary by destroying all the unquiet reflections of your false wisdom. When you shall no longer act from natural vivacity you will be wise without your wisdom. The movements of grace are simple, ingenuous, childlike. Impetuous nature thinks much and speaks much. Grace thinks little and says little, because it is simple, peaceable, and inwardly collected." Thus the ways of grace are inward, but the ways of nature are ever outward.

Now, if we could conquer our human spirit which unfortunately controls so many of our actions, we would not murmur for the purpose of shielding our deficiencies. The agency of this destructive spirit creeps into all our works. It deteriorates their purity of intention and saps their strength. "Or it comes," remarks Father Faber, "upon good and single-minded intentions, and warps them from their

direction, and makes them useless for any supernatural purpose." And elsewhere he tells us that "another mark of the human spirit is to be found in the self-annoyance or disgust which arises in us at the view of our own faults. It casts us down also because of the effects of our good works or the ill success of earnest efforts. . . . . There is an obstinate attachment to devotional practices, because we fancy they have done us good, which looks like supernatural perseverance, and yet it is in truth nothing but the pertinacity of the human spirit."

This characterization seems directed against our objector, and we may say that it strikes at the very root of the evil. There is no doubt, that the human spirit is doing effective work. In our false wisdom, we see the truth but dimly, because we allow ourselves to be distracted by the duties of our active ministry. If we acted with the true spirit, we would not be so faint-hearted. For "the ministry of teaching," says Rodriguez, "which at first appears to detach us from God, has, when exercised with a properly regulated zeal, the very opposite effect, for it unites us more intimately with Him." The spirit of grace will strengthen us to overcome all obstacles, if we do not hinder its action. Thus will our ministry of teaching conduce towards our interior recollection rather than invite distraction.

Consequently, our labor for the spiritual advancement of our pupils will turn to our advantage instead of doing us harm. It will undoubtedly favor our progress in virtue and perfection. "For the more water that is taken from a well," says Clement of

Alexandria, "the more limpid and wholesome the water becomes; whereas if no water were drawn therefrom, it would soon become stagnant, if not poisonous. And if a knife be in constant use, it remains bright and polished, but if neglected and put aside, it would become rusty and worthless. A flame of fire grows in extent and intensity and loses nothing thereby." Moreover, "the best means of instructing one's self," he also affirms, "is to instruct others. For the most certain progress in the science which we cultivate results from teaching it." The same principle is applicable to spiritual things.

The word of God is a two-edged sword. It strikes him who uses it as well as him against whom it is directed. Now, what we have to say to others is often applicable to ourselves, and perhaps more so than to any one else. Thus if our conduct do not correspond to our teaching, we immediately hear a warning voice from our interior monitor, proclaiming: Woe to him who teaches what he does not practise! For truthfully speaks the poet when he counsels to

> "Take thy balance, if thou be so wise,
> And weigh the wind that under heaven doth blow;
> Or weigh the light that in the East doth rise;
> Or weigh the thought that from man's mind doth flow."

Hence, it is evident that when we fulfill the duties of our ministry in accordance with the spirit of grace and its dictates, teaching, far from being an occasion of relaxation or distraction, contributes powerfully to our sanctification. It emulates us to the attainment of our perfection that we may be better prepared to sanctify others by leading them to God.

Besides, let us recall the numberless graces which God showers down upon those who teach others unto righteousness. If the Lord has promised a splendid reward to those who practise the corporal works of mercy, with what liberality will He not crown those who devote themselves to the spiritual works of mercy! These latter works are as far above the former as the soul is superior to the body.

Hence, according to St. John Chrysostom, it is to them that these words of the Gospel may be applied: *Give and it shall be given unto you.*(1) And St. Peter Chrysologus affirms that the pastors of souls and the apostles of youth are like the nurses appointed to the children of kings. "The nurses of infant princes," he says, "are nourished with the most delicate meats, that their milk may be of the best quality. Thus it is that the King of kings takes care that those who are charged with the education of youth, be nourished with the choicest meats from His table, that they may be better qualified to give to His children the milk of sound and wholesome doctrine."

Consequently, we should ever keep this consoling thought in view, God has made teaching our principal means of sanctification, one of the special objects of our vocation. In other religious orders or congregations, perfection consists in the strict cloistral observances, or in the attentive and assiduous chanting of the divine office, or in contemplative exercises, or else in austerities peculiar to their order, or perhaps in the active united to the contemplative life. Ours is both active and contemplative, and our perfection is

(1) *St. Luke, c, vi, 38.*

to be attained in fidelity to the diverse works of charity assigned us by obedience. If this be our practice or proper conduct, we may then say to the children what St. Paul said to the Thessalonians: *You are our glory and our joy;* (1) or to the Philippians: *You are my joy and my crown.* (2)

Our happiness and perfection consist essentially in strict fidelity in educating youth in a Christian manner. Having that deeply impressed on our minds, we should view the spirit of retirement as nothing more than a temptation, designed by the tempter to turn us from the duties we owe to our neighbor.

And as to the faults which are consequent on human frailty, we will address the teacher in the words of Father Segneri: "Young teacher, if you feel inclined to discouragement at the thought of the faults you commit in your ministry, often meditate on these consoling words of St. James: *He who causeth a sinner to be converted from the error of his way, shall save his soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.* (3) Probably, there shall be no sinners in your class to be converted, although such a thing is possible, but consider the number of sins you can prevent by your strict supervision, without taking into account the instructions you give them or the prayers you say for them. Undoubtedly, the great charity you evince toward your pupils will cover a multitude of faults, inasmuch as it will spare you much suffering in purgatory. . . . . You will, at least, not have to dread, as a consequence of such faults committed in your ministry, certain

*(1) I. Thess., ii, 20. (2) c. iv, 1. (3) c. v, 20.*

punishments which God often inflicts in the spiritual life, and which are certainly much to be dreaded."

Hence, let us be renewed in courage, being confident that God will bless our purity of intention and enlightened zeal, and remember that His judgments are more merciful than those of men. Let us do what we can, nobly and generously, and God will ask no more. Impossibilities we can not accomplish, but we can render Him a just and reasonable service. We should banish, therefore, this human spirit, the enemy and destroyer of good, which has caused us such uneasiness of mind, and we may rest assured, that our ministry will be conducive to our perfection, if we listen to the spirit of grace and heed its dictates.

And "to close our hearts forever against the temptation which leads us to think that we imperil our salvation by serving our neighbor, and to reassure the most scrupulous and timid hearts," says Rodriguez, "pre-suppose what is in reality a self-evident and most important truth. It is that in whatever position it has pleased God to place us, there our salvation is more certain than in any other, no matter how tempting it may appear. Consequently, no matter where or what obedience may assign us, provided we be animated with true zeal and exercise our ministry with prudence, we are in greater safety, than if to escape the danger inherent in our duties, we were to bury ourselves in the deepest solitude and retreat. If we are where God wishes us to be, then we are under His direct protection, according to the words of the Psalmist: *O Lord, Thou hast crowned us, as with a shield of Thy good will.* (1) . . . .

(1) *Ps., v, 13.*

"Oh! great is the error of the Christian teacher who, taking counsel only with himself, and being disgusted with his ministry, presumes that he would accomplish more for God's honor and glory and his own salvation in a position other than that which obedience assigned him! Would to heaven, that melancholy experience had not taught us the unhappy consequences of such conduct! . . . . We should have a great dread of entertaining the slightest desire and ever be on our guard against our likes and dislikes for this or that position and function. All that we have to do is to divest ourselves of our own will, of that human spirit, and conform ourselves to God's will, as expressed in our superior's command. No road is so safe for us as that of obedience. We must needs be thoroughly convinced that nowhere shall we be so certain of working out our salvation as where the Divine will shall have placed us."

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## I.

### ST. AUGUSTINE AND ST. IGNATIUS ON THE DANGERS INCURRED IN THE SERVICE OF OUR NEIGHBOR.

St. Augustine, when exercising the functions of his arduous ministry, experienced occasionally some very depressing thoughts concerning his own salvation. When assailed by these distressing doubts, he writes, I was tempted to seek refuge in solitude. Being terrified at the sight of my sins and oppressed by the weight of my many miseries, the idea of retreat

entered my mind, but this thought arrested me: "Jesus Christ died for all, that those who live, may live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them, and rose again from the dead." Then I said to God: "I place all my interests in Thy hands; Thou knowest my incapacity and my weakness. Deign, O Lord, to instruct me and to heal me!"

St. Ignatius of Loyola was accustomed to say that even if he were certain that in dying then he would infallibly save his soul, he would prefer to risk his salvation by remaining on earth that he might gain souls for Christ.

Some one having observed to him that it was not prudent to risk his own soul in order to save that of his neighbor, he replied with that ardent zeal which is only inspired by strong, robust faith: "Do you think that God is a tyrant? If I put myself in danger for the sole purpose of gaining souls for Him, think you that He would afterwards send me to hell?" *Fear not,* said Josue to the chiefs of the army, *neither be ye discouraged; take courage, be strong.*[1] Imagine that God is addressing these words to you, and march ever forward with a heart filled with a firm confidence and holy intrepidity. It is Thou, O Lord, who hast ordained that I teach youth the way of Thy justice: by devoting myself to this work, in accordance with my rule and in obedience to Thy commands, what need I fear?

(1) *c. x. 25.*

## II.

### EDUCATION CONFERS A MUTUAL BENEFIT ON BOTH PUPIL AND TEACHER.

There is no doubt, that if we exercise the functions of our ministry in the proper spirit, the education of youth, instead of being to us an occasion of committing faults, will prove one of the most powerful means of forming our own character. Bishop Dupanloup expressed himself very clearly on this subject, thus: "How often have I not seen this fact fully verified! Personally, the little I know, if that little can be called something, I owe to God's goodness and to the care I took in preparing my catechetical instructions for the children, and then in directing their education.

"Now when we reflect on it, this is readily understood. Thus, these children of the age of twelve, either more or less, were an admirable subject of study, thought, and hence conducive to the moral and intellectual development of those who devoted themselves to this beautiful work with assiduity and love. *How would it be possible for me not to love little children? To them do I owe all that God has done for me!* This was the language of the best catechist of the French Church, M. Borderies, who was seventy years of age when he uttered it. At the time of his death, he was Bishop of Versailles.

"However in mentioning this conversation, I merely desired to point out the reason of the real secret for this enthusiastic feeling, which is experi-

enced in devotion to duty and love for children. I ask no more, for possessing these excellent qualities, you will succeed admirably. But if these be wanting, you will accomplish nothing. Your own good sense will perceive the correctness of my statement.

"Indeed, your whole soul must enter into your work: your intellect, your heart, all your powers and faculties, nay, your very existence. Do not, therefore, weaken your powers by dividing your affections. Consequently, do not view your duty as a means of diversion, or as a kind of pastime.

"Hence, give me a man, even a young, or a very youthful professor, but who applies himself with all due diligence and assiduity to his duty, who throws himself, body and soul, into his work, who makes the fulfillment of duties the sole business of his life, and I shall not fear to affirm that such constant application to the most elementary branches of education, this unswerving devotedness to the humblest functions, will make of him a superior man in character and in the specialty he professes.

"I know of no ministry more powerful, more fruitful for educating one's self than the ministry of teaching. I am not aware of any calling so eminently calculated for forming eminent men, as that of a professorship, or that of a catechist."

Therefore, let us fulfill our duties with zeal, devotedness, and a spirit of faith. Let us strive to avoid or overcome the faults to which we are naturally inclined. If we act thus, our ministry of teaching, instead of being a danger to our salvation. or an obstacle to our personal perfection, will become for us a power-

ful means of attaining our own sanctification as well as procuring our neighbor's salvation.

St. Peter has these encouraging words: *Labor the more, that by good work you may make sure your calling and election. For doing these things, you shall not sin at any time.* (1)

*For so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour* JESUS CHRIST. (2)

And St. Paul admonishes Timothy, saying: *Take heed to thyself, and to doctrine: be earnest in them. For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.* (3)

Hence, this counsel of Terence is applicable to the young teacher: We should look at the lives of all as at a mirror, and take others an example for ourselves.

And "If I am left to myself, behold I am nothing, and all weakness; but if Thou shouldst graciously look upon me, I presently become strong, and am filled with a new joy.

"And it is very wonderful that I am so quickly raised up, and so graciously embraced by Thee; I, who by my own weight, am always sinking to the bottom." (4)

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*(1) II. St. Peter, i, 10. (2) Ibid., 11. (3) I. Tim., iv, 16.*
*(4) The Following of Christ, Book III., Chapter VIII., 1.*

# NINETEENTH OBJECTION.

## TEACHING CEASES TO GIVE PLEASURE: IT IS WEARISOME.

"Consider
The sparrows of the air of small account:
Our God doth view
Whether they fall or mount,
He guards us too."—*Christina Rosetti.*

If teaching be considered arduous, we must acknowledge that it has also its moments of monotony and wearisomeness. But this is equally true of all professions and avocations. Hence, there is perhaps no better test of our character than perseverance in our daily routine duties, despite all these feelings of disgust. Unless our will be well educated, we can not claim to have character, and failure and weariness are the certain result. Indeed, we even get weary of pleasures. Our happiness apparently depends upon constant changes. Novelties are always attractive, because they are out of the ordinary rut. When we have exhausted all our resources, we begin the rounds again, ever hoping for something new and startling. But soon we find out that there is nothing new under the sun, and thus we are compelled to resume the old. Nevertheless, we have gained nothing in all our ramblings. We are, however, constrained to acknowledge that our old haunts possess all the attractions we had looked for elsewhere, but that we failed to appreciate them. Hence, after much loss of time and waste of energy, experience teaches that

our holy ministry is the one best adapted to our talents and ability, the one in which we can accomplish the greatest good.

Consequently, the Christian teacher who alleges that teaching has ceased to be a pleasure to him, declares thereby his inconstancy and fickleness. He is afflicted with a spiritual malady. According to Father Faber this might be styled *spiritual idleness.* For idleness is so natural, "that very idle men plead its very naturalness as a proof that it is almost irresistible. No man does hard work naturally. Idleness of its own nature is sweet, sweeter than the brightest gift the gay world can give."

Now, if perseverance is among the most precious of graces, then this spiritual idleness may be considered one of the chief vices which beset the Christian teacher in his ministry. It requires no deep philosophy to understand that spiritual idleness is the contradictory of perseverance. Hence, when the objection is carefully analyzed, we will readily perceive that spiritual idleness is its cankerworm. What then are the symptoms by which it may be recognized? These are dissipation, sadness and low spirits, general languor, useless industry, a general indifference about the use of our time, and loquacity. It will, therefore, not be altogether unprofitable to study some of the symptoms of this most enervating spiritual malady. Father Faber will be our guide while making the analysis.

Let us then succinctly see in what dissipation consists Apparently, it is only remotely connected with this spiritual malady. But upon closer inspection,

we notice that dissipation is the tendency to defer matters or duties beyond their proper times or prescribed limits. We are apt to delay one duty so that it interferes with another. "All duties," observes our guide, "are felt irksome obligations, a yoke beneath which we fret and lose peace." The consequence is that our duty is performed hurriedly, without considering how it should be accomplished, but merely that it is done. Whereas the proper method would be to do each day at the prescribed time, perseveringly, and with our mind turned to God. The Christian teacher who conscientiously adheres to his daily regulation, will look upon each duty as it comes as the one ordained, and hence he will fulfill it faithfully. He is never unoccupied, consequently he is happy. He is, therefore, never weary, and one duty relieves the other at stated intervals, thus his ministry is always interesting and pleasant. Hence, he finds nothing monotonous in teaching, whereas the teacher who is given to dissipation, becomes naturally discouraged and sad.

This leads us to the consideration of sadness and low spirits. The precipitation with which the Christian teacher accomplishes his functions, involves him in many difficulties. "First comes self-dissatisfaction. Then captiousness and self-defense, after which we feel that the power to pray is gone from us, as our strength goes from us in an illness. These are followed by positive ill-temper, in an hour of which we lose weeks of struggle and progress. With this is coupled a morbid inclination to judge and criticize others." The natural consequence of these

failings is sadness and low spirits. Father Faber is correct when he affirms that the soul of sadness is self-love. Why are we sad? Is it not because we have become weary of well-doing? "We desire to be praised," whispers our guide, "and are unhappy if no notice is taken of what we do. We seek publicity as something which will console, rest, and satisfy us. . . . The world is our sunbeam and we come out to bask in it."

There is perhaps nothing more destructive to the real interest of our ministry than this sadness. It makes us timid and passive where we should be bold and active. This is the time that we ought to be all zeal and energy. If we give way to this sluggish feeling, we are apt to waste valuable time in building castles in the air. Truly, we are encouraging this spiritual idleness, because we are doing no positive good. But "we must be all the more faithful because we are sad; and we must beware of adopting any change while the cloud is upon us. Exactness in little duties is a wonderful source of cheerfulness. We must look out for opportunities of giving way to others. We must regard, not the act only which we do, but the time which obedience has fixed for doing it, whether it be the obedience of self, or director; for the marvellous virtue of obedience resides often more in the time and manner of an act, than in the act itself."

Moreover, from dissipation and sadness, there follows a species of languor which we have all experienced, more or less, at one time or another, of our lives. There are moments when we feel no inclina-

tion to do anything, because we seem utterly nerveless, and without power or animation. We are, as it were, morally powerless. Then there comes a certain physical feeling of incapacity which is opposed to any exertion, making duty doubly irksome. We need not at all wonder that the Christian teacher should then experience no pleasure in his ministry, but rather find it hard and wearisome. "Everything that everybody does," judiciously remarks Father Faber, "seems inopportune, and out of good taste. Without rhyme or reason we have an almost universal nausea of men and things, and we give in to 'the spirit of causeless irritation' which characterizes the paralytic. . . . In fact our state is a kind of passive possession of the spirit of disgust and sloth; it is as if we had lost the power of being serious, and were numb, or in a trance, so far as spiritual things are concerned."

Naturally, we then occupy ourselves with much useless industry which has hardly any bearing upon our ministry. Castle-building is perhaps the chief attraction; but this occupation "literally desolates and debauches the soul. It passes over it like a ruinous eruption, leaving nothing fresh, green, or fruit-bearing behind it, but a general languor, peevishness, weariness with God."

Now, as a consequence of this feeling, there is a general indifference about the use of time. We seem to have lost our appreciation of its value. And yet, if we are aiming at perfection, there is not a moment that we can afford to trifle away. Our eternity depends upon it, hence it is precious and irrevocable.

Very few faults are irreparable, Father Faber observes, but the loss of time is one of these few; and when we consider how easy a fault is, how frequent, how silent, how alluring, we shall discern something of its real danger. No idle man, he continues, believes himself to be idle, except in the lucid intervals of grace; no one will credit how strong the habit of losing time will rapidly become. If the Christian teacher really wishes to avoid this dangerous rock, he must strongly determine to adhere to his daily regulation, being exact that one exercise does not infringe upon the other, but doing each within the limits prescribed. Thus he will acquire the good habit of being always usefully employed, and will thereby be enabled to overcome weariness and disgust.

He may thus escape the last symptom of spiritual idleness, namely, loquacity. But when we view the matter in its true light, it is difficult to see how those subject to this malady can escape this fault. It is said that the "blues" or low spirits incline a person to be reticent. Withal, it has been truly observed that there is an inordinate itch for talking while thus afflicted. "In spirituality when the tired soul," cautiously remarks our guide, "seeks undue vent of recreation, there is no relief, except castle-building, more dangerous than loquacity. Some are tempted to be loquacious with everybody who will be a listener; others only with certain people, who are sympathetic, and with whom to exchange sentiments is to rest their minds. Others are only tempted to talk at wrong times and on wrong subjects."

Now, should the Christian teacher feel weary, he ought to remember that he will never regret having kept silence. Publius Syrus affirmed: I have often regretted having spoken, never having kept silent. Besides, weariness is not relieved by loquacity. Its effect is rather to increase it. If the teacher be sincere, then his best remedy is in persistent, persevering labor, guided by obedience.

Doubtless, the condition of such a Christian teacher is deserving of sympathy and commiseration. But, he should not necessarily grow despondent. The moment that he becomes conscious of his real state, let him be prompt to shake it off, seeking relief in multitudinous occupations, regulated by his superior. This will divert his attention from self to his work, and if persevered in will restore him to cheerfulness. Interest in his ministry will be renewed, and his labors will again become a pleasure. Weariness can find no place in a wholesome and fruitful activity of mind and heart.

Moreover, let the Christian teacher reflect that he is not alone in his misery. How many people are there not to be found who have no taste whatever for their avocation! Nevertheless, they are obliged to go through the daily drudgery, and that perhaps for a whole lifetime! How many trades and professions are there not in the world that are hard, painful, and tiresome to those who follow them, and withal far from being lucrative or even remunerative! And yet, there are always people to do the work despite their disadvantages and their repugnances. Let us look around us and question such

and such teachers with whom we are acquainted, and they will most probably tell us that they are weary and tired of their employment, and that they find their position painful, difficult, nay, insupportable. But they must needs continue where they are and endure their sufferings with patience during long and burdensome years.

Surely the exile is weary of foreign climes to which unfortunate circumstances have banished him. But should he, on that account, give way to despair? Undoubtedly not, for in doing so he would not better his condition or improve his position. If he be reasonable, he resigns himself to the inevitable, places his confidence in God, and lives in the hope of again seeing happy years.

Let us then be more reasonable, more Christian, and more religious. We should not forget that the life of man on earth, according to holy Job, is a constant warfare. (1) It is only by war that we conquer peace. Heaven is gained only by violence. It was necessary that Christ should die and so enter into His glory. Surely, we can not hope to reach heaven by any other path. For we shall enjoy the glory and felicity of Christ only on condition that we share in His labors and sufferings.

St. Paul did not weary when loaded with chains, and confined in the dark, noisome dungeon in Rome. Assuredly, nature must have felt it keenly too; but grace converted his sufferings into joy. That his disciples might know the pleasure he experienced, he was accustomed to subscribe his admirable instructions

*(1) c. vii, 1.*

to them during his imprisonment: *Paul, prisoner for Jesus Christ.* (1)

We may indeed be weary, but we must be courageous. It may be the hour of our trial, hence we should not despair. Sunshine will return and our ministry will again afford us the same pleasure that we experienced in the past, provided we are faithful and persevere in our duty.

> "Thy sum of duty let two words contain,
> (O may they graven in thy heart remain!)
> Be humble and just."—*Prior.*

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THOUGHTS CALCULATED TO INSPIRE ZEAL.

Of all divine things, observe St. Denis, the most divine is to co-operate with God in the salvation of souls.

If you saw a blind man on the point of falling into a ditch, he says elsewhere, you would endeavor to save him. How then can you stand by and see your brethren precipitating themselves into hell, and not stretch out your hand to save them from eternal perdition.

The love of God, says St. Gregory, is never idle. When it exists it performs great things. If it does not act, it is not true love.

If the freeing of a man from physical death, he remarks again, which must after all happen sooner or later, be deemed worthy of reward, how much more does not he merit who delivers a soul from

(1) *Ephes., iii, 1; c. iv, 1; Coloss., iv, 3; II Tim., i. 8.*

eternal death and causes it to enjoy God in glory for all eternity?

Again he says: No sacrifice we can offer to God is so great, so acceptable, as zeal for souls.

Show me, if you can, exclaims St. Augustine, love in repose, and doing nothing for the object beloved!

No service, said St. John Chrysostom, is so agreeable to God as the saving of souls.

He who macerates his body by austerities, he remarks judiciously, has less merit than he who gains souls for God.

There are two ways of attaining to salvation, he affirms again; either we labor for our own salvation alone, or we work also for our neighbor's salvation. It must be acknowledged that fasting, corporal austerities, and such like virtues, are very useful for the salvation of him who practises them; but alms, teaching, and those acts of charity we do for our neighbor are by far greater virtues in the sight of God.

One single soul, he affirms positively, gained to Jesus Christ, may efface an infinitude of our sins, and become the price of our own salvation.

Would you not feel pleased with yourself, he says also, if you had spent large sums in relieving the wants of the poor? He who labors to save souls effects still more.

Let your zeal be animated by charity, counsels St. Bernard, enlightened by knowledge, strengthened by constancy; let it be fervent, circumspect, invincible; let it be neither lukewarm, nor indiscreet, nor timid.

A beast of burden stumbles and falls, he tells us, and we at once hasten to raise it up. We see souls falling into sin and we do not go to their aid.

When St. Catherine of Sienna saw a priest passing along the street, she would leave her house to go and kiss the ground on which he had walked. When asked why she did this, she replied: "Because God has made known to me the beauty of a soul in the state of grace. I have since then held those engaged in the conversion of sinners in such veneration, that I can not help manifesting it by kissing the ground on which they have walked."

It is not sufficient for me to serve the Lord, affirms St. Ignatius; it is, moreover, necessary that as far as it depends on me, all hearts should love Him and all tongues should bless Him.

Who will grant me to die, asks St. Francis Xavier, that all may know Thee?

If he who begins, said St. Theresa, makes magnanimous efforts to raise himself by God's help to the highest summit of perfection, it is my opinion that he never enters heaven alone. He always leads a numerous troop along with him; as he is a valiant captain, God gives him many soldiers to accompany him.

Let the young Christian teacher apply to himself these truthful words of Thomas à Kempis:

"I could wish I had often been silent, and that I had not been in company.

"But why are we so willing to talk and discourse with one another, since we seldom return to silence without prejudice to our conscience.

"The reason why we are so willing to talk is, because by discoursing together we seek comfort from one another, and would gladly ease the heart wearied by various thoughts.

"And we very willingly talk and think of such things as we most love and desire, or which we imagine contrary to us.

"Therefore we must watch and pray that our time may not pass away without fruit." (1)

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book I., Chapter X., i.*

# TWENTIETH OBJECTION.

## THE ATTAINMENT OF SALVATION DOES NOT AFTER ALL REQUIRE SO MUCH LABOR.

"Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet! I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

"I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day; and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

"So long Thy power has blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

—*Cardinal Newman.*

Man is impelled by his nature to seek happiness. It is both his proximate and ultimate end. For this he was created. Withal, we find much misery and unhappiness. It has been thus since the fall of man. With sin came the real and only evil, together with its terrible consequences. Experience teaches that men seek their happiness in creatures, but only to be doomed to bitter disappointment, chagrin, or cruel remorse. True happiness, according to Thomas à Kempis, consists in a peaceful conscience, with an

unswerving fidelity to the duties of our sublime calling.

Now, every man has a special vocation. This is a truism. No two men have precisely the same. Therefore, one's present and future happiness depends upon it. Hence, if we fail to correspond with God's grace or to attain the object of our vocation, we will run a great risk of losing our ultimate end.

"In the far back of an unbeginning eternity we shall see," writes Father Faber in *Spiritual Conferences,* "a clear and special purpose for which God created us, an individual specialty, which he has never quite repeated in any other of His creatures, a special attraction which called out His love to us, or rather, which His love invented, and which made us more dear in His sight than possible better men would have been. This specialty decided our vocation upon earth. It fixed our place. It determined our time. It fashioned our work. All the mercies of our lives and their faces set toward it. Outward circumstances made a current which drew us that way. All our graces were in order to it. All our inspirations, like according notes in music, were a unity, and each sounded out of that eternal purpose and seemed to call us on to its fulfillment.

"Nowhere do we find God so infallibly as in the special vocation which He gives us. It is certainly an overwhelming truth, and yet a cheering one, that we have all a special vocation from God. But there is another truth lying close to it, which is almost as astonishing. It is this. We are continually receiving special revelations from God. We live in the midst

of revelations. We are almost always inspired, not merely now and then, but almost always, and in a very true and peculiar sense. In other words, we are continually receiving what we ordinarily call inspirations. Moreover, these inspirations are immediately connected with our special vocation. They are to our vocation what the sun and rain are to the seed or the growing plant. They further God's special design upon us, and enable us to develop itself. Holiness of the highest kind is distinguished by the quickness and fineness of the ear in detecting these inspirations, and by its promptitude and docility in following them.

"If we have rightly estimated the importance of our special vocation, we shall set a due value on these inspirations. But as the vocation is itself a source of holy and salutary fear, so likewise are the inspirations. God ever speaking, the world ever making us deaf; this is something like a description of our state. We must strain our ears to catch our inspirations, or they will sound only like an inarticulate murmur, even when they are not inaudible altogether. Without our inward life we have no chance of discerning them. Not infrequently they require other ears than our own to hear them; very frequently other minds than our own to understand them. This is part of the necessity of the spiritual direction.

"Spiritual direction is almost a necessary condition of self-knowledge, so is it in ordinary cases almost an inevitable condition of the knowledge of God's dealing with our souls.

"But the secret method of arriving at a knowledge

of God's eternal purpose about us is to be found in the right use of the present moment. We must esteem our present grace, and rest in it, and with tranquil assiduity correspond to it. Our present grace is the most infallible will of God. . . . The spiritual direction of multitudes of men consists of nothing but keeping them to this; and it is one of those unlikely works which has the misfortune of being seldom successful where most indispensable.

"Now, it is plain that the knowledge of our vocation will affect our whole spiritual life. Men who enjoy the vision of it lead special lives based upon that knowledge. It is a great grace, but only to those who have it. It would not be a great grace to those to whom God does not give it."

Whence comes it, then, that we grow weary of our vocation? Is our interior life well ordered? If that be not in conformity with the spirit of our special vocation, our outward life will not reflect it. It is the interior life that gives the character to our outward conduct, and not the outward life to the interior. Have we not become imbued with a spirit of worldiness? If so let us be on our guard, for the worldly spirit is antagonistic to the life of faith, and will ultimately lead us to ruin.

Now, the Christian teacher who claims that the attainment of his salvation can be effected with less labor in the world than in religion, gives evidence of the spiritual ravages which the destructive spirit of worldliness has already made in his soul. He sees no longer the functions of his sublime ministry with the eyes of faith, nor performs his duty through

pure, disinterested motives. He is ready to take mere pretexts for solid reasons, and listens attentively to the whisperings of perverse nature. At last, he thinks himself justified to abandon his vocation, because he imagines that he is where he ought not to be.

But if after mature deliberation and honest consultations with our spiritual director, we find that we are not called, then it is our duty to withdraw. Then, and under such circumstances, our action is honorable. For God does not expect impossibilities. However, before taking a final step, let us reflect, consult, and above all implore the light of heaven with earnestness of soul.

The following are the wise counsels which St. Alphonsus Liguori gave to some of the members of his congregation who wished to return to the world:

"Pray, reflect, and meditate in the holy presence of God, and your sentiments will change for the better; the demon only could inspire you with the thoughts which, at present, fill your mind. Do not forget that to wish to renounce the holy state to which the divine mercy has called you, *is to wish to renounce your salvation.*

"I say and I repeat that many are eternally lost, because they abandoned their vocation. The chain of graces was broken; and this being the case there was very little hope for them. Moreover, their infidelity is nearly always punished, even in this world, by bitter remorse and constant inquietude."

Furthermore, the Christian teacher must not forget that he should persevere not only to insure his own

salvation, but also because of the souls confided to his care and which God wishes and has appointed him to save for Him.

"Their salvation," observed St. Vincent de Paul to his missionaries, (1) "depends partially on your instruction. What excuse could we offer to the Almighty if any of them should die and be lost through our fault? Would we not have to reproach ourselves that we were the cause of their damnation for not having assisted them as we should? And ought we not to fear that an account will be demanded of us at the hour of our death? On the contrary, if we but correspond faithfully to the obligations of our vocation, shall we not have reason to hope that God will increase His graces, day by day, that He will bless our labors, and that, lastly, all those souls that shall obtain their salvation through our ministry, will bear testimony to God of our fidelity to our duties?"

Consequently, do not allow a contradiction, or a difficulty, or a feeling of discouragement to cause us to run the risk not only of our own salvation, but also the possibility of becoming responsible for the salvation of many others.

"If you wish to bear up against the trials of life," says St. Augustine, "remember the recompense promised to the faithful servant. The vine-dresser would often feel inclined to lose courage at his work, if he did not look forward to the generous reward of his labors.

"Keep constantly in mind the thought of the magnificent promises made by God to those who labor for

*(1) Esprit de S. Vincent de Paul.*

their neighbor's salvation. If you do this you will find it easy to count as nothing the trials of your earthly pilgrimage."

Let us remember that the conveniences and pleasures of life, the desire of changes, and the fear of difficulties have deceived many. Have we fully considered the miseries of life? The cross meets us everywhere and no one is exempt therefrom.

Let us listen to the Christian philosopher, Thomas à Kempis, and meditate seriously on his pregnant thoughts:

"*Christ.* Son, I would not have thee seek for such a peace, as to be without temptations, or to meet with no adversity.

"But even then to think thou hast found peace, when thou shalt be exercised with divers tribulations and tried in many adversities.

"If thou shalt say thou art not able to suffer so much, how then wilt thou endure the fire of purgatory?

"Of two evils, one ought always to choose the less.

"That thou mayest, therefore, escape the everlasting punishment to come, labor to endure present evils with patience for God's sake.

"Dost thou think the men of this world suffer little or nothing? Thou shalt not find it so, though thou seek out the most delicate.

"But thou wilt say they have many delights, and follow their wills, and therefore make small account of their tribulations.

"Suppose it be so, that they have all they desire; how long dost thou think this will last?

"Behold, they shall vanish away like smoke that abounds in this world, and there shall be no remembrance of their past joys.

"Nay, even whilst they are living they enjoy them not without a mixture of bitterness, irksomeness, and fear.

"For the very same thing in which they conceive a delight, doth often bring upon them a punishment of sorrow.

"It is but just it should be so with them, that since they inordinately seek and follow their pleasures, they should not satisfy them without confusion and uneasiness.

"O! how short, how deceitful, how inordinate and filthy are all these pleasures!

"Yet through sottishness and blindness men understand this not; but like brute beasts, for a small pleasure in this mortal life, they incur the eternal death of their souls.

"But thou, my son, *go not after thy concupiscence, but turn away from thy own will.*(1)

"*Delight in the Lord, and He will give thee the desires of thy heart.*(2)

"For if thou wilt be delighted in truth, and receive more abundant consolation from Me, behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and the renouncing all those mean pleasures, thou shalt be blessed, and an exceeding great comfort be derived to thy soul.

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*(1) Eccles., xviii. (2) Psalm, xxxvi.*

"And the more thou withdrawest thyself from all comfort of things created, the more sweet and the more powerful consolations wilt thou find in Me.

"But thou shalt not at first attain to these without some sorrow and labor in the conflict.

"The old custom will stand in thy way, but by a better custom it shall be overcome.

"The flesh will complain, but by the fervor of the spirit it shall be kept under.

"The old serpent will tempt thee and give thee trouble; but by prayer he shall be put to flight; moreover, by keeping thyself always employed in some useful labor, his access to thee shall be in a great measure impeded." (1)

For Petrarch tells us in the *Triumph of Eternity* that

> "The time will come when every change shall cease,
> This quick revolving wheel shall rest in peace;
> No summer then shall glow, nor winter freeze,
> Nothing shall be to come, and nothing past,
> But an eternal now shall ever last."

———*———

## BISHOP SPALDING'S APHORISMS AND REFLECTIONS PERTINENT TO EDUCATION.

1.—Education is little else than the continuous methodical suggestion of what is true, useful, and good, to the end that the pupil may be brought under its influence and permit it to mould his life. It is by means of suggestion that the teacher is able to make him feel that he is a free agent, that it lies in his power to become other and nobler than he is,

*(1) The Following of Christ, Book III., Chapter XII.*

and that it is his duty as it is his privilege to develop in himself a diviner kind of consciousness which alone makes truer knowledge and purer love possible. Persuade him that he has ability, and he will labor to justify your opinion of him; but if the master discourage him he loses self-confidence and ceases to make effort.

2.—To strengthen the will, to invigorate the mind, to correct and refine the taste, to balance and confirm the judgment, and to inure the body to bear labor and pain—to this the educator devotes his thought and care.

3.—To give to the body, the mind, the will, the heart, the imagination, the conscience, the power and beauty proper to each is the business of education; and it is the business of the teacher therefore to lead his pupils to become self-active in their whole being and in every direction. His purpose should be to strengthen and supple the body, to confirm the will, to purify the heart, to quicken the mind, to fortify reason and to make conscience sovereign.

4.—The aim of education is to strengthen and multiply the powers and activities of the mind rather than to increase its possessions.

5.—More inspiring and interesting teaching alone can make progress in education possible: for such teaching alone has power to produce greater self-activity, greater concentration of mind, greater desire to learn not only how to get a living, but how to live.

6.—Moral education is the development of individuality, and individuality can not be developed

by formulas and mechanical processes: it is the work of the master who brings to his task a genuine and loving interest in the individual.

7.—There is a grave defect in the school where the playground suggests happy, and the classroom disagreeable thoughts. It is possible to lead the young to take pleasure in learning, and the teacher who fails in this, fails altogether. It is well that they find amusement in games, but it is indispensable that they delight in study. Exercise of body and exercise of mind are supplementary, and both may be made recreative and educative.

8.—When knowledge or belief becomes fixed in dogma, it loses much of its power to interest and educate. Hence the teacher may not rest content with dogmatic assertions, but must adapt what he imparts to a circle of living ideas.

9.—The end of education is identical with that of life. It is, in fact, the unfolding of life with a view to its end.

10.—The educator's goal is power and skill rather than knowledge. He who leaves school, knowing little, but with a longing for knowledge, will go farther than one who quits, knowing many things, but not caring to learn more.

11.—The teacher is worth what the man is worth.

12.—The test of the worth of the school is not the amount of knowledge it imparts, but the self-activity it calls forth.

13.—To educate one must be educated; and to educate children one must have a luminous mind and a brave and cheerful heart.

14.—With the young imitation is an irresistible impulse, and it is little less than criminal not to place before them that which is most worthy of imitation. Let the teacher then be a wise, strong, and cheerful man that when he speaks of heroes, saints, and sages, his pupils may find his words credible.

15.—Let the young be taught to believe in the best things: in courage, magnanimity, truthfulness, chastity, and love; for so long as experience has not revealed their supreme worth, through faith alone can their value become known to them.

16.—Let the teacher cultivate habits of admiration, not of criticism. Let him accustom the young to live in the company of the great masters with such joy and enthusiasm that they shall not think it worth while to dwell on their faults; for this is the mood which urges to self-activity, favors growth, increases the power to will and to love, without which there is no good in life.

17.—Intellectual culture has a moral value. Attention and reflection, without which it can not be acquired are virtuous habits since they imply self-direction and self-control. One can hardly live in the world of intelligible beings and at the same time find pleasure in what is false or low. Then the disinterested love of truth which culture fosters is akin to unselfishness which is a characteristic of the good.

18.—The young should be led to widen the meaning of duty; to accustom themselves to recognize and feel that there are few things which it is well to do, that duty does not command them to do.

19.—The seed of religion must be sown in the

virginal hearts of children, who gladly receive and hold whatever is offered to them in the name of faith, hope, and love; but in a soil which has been parched and wasted by passion and sin, the divine germs will not take root. To teach us this Christ took children in His arms, and said: "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

20.—Let us not accustom the young to pious practices in a way which shall lead them to identify religion with these observances, lest, having become mature men, in losing fondness for what is ceremonial and devotional, they lose also religious earnestness and truth.

21.—The teacher should begin with facts, continue with them long, and never lose sight of them.

22.—To set the higher motives to work, the teacher must touch the soul of his pupil, must make him feel that he belongs to a divine order. Thus shall he awaken him to self-respect, and inspire him with a love of excellence, and when he perceives that his efforts give pleasure to the teacher, he is impelled to new exertions, especially if the teacher himself is noble and self-active.

23.—An educated man knows things, and he knows also to reason and write of them. The first is the more important, but is the business of a life-time: the second is also necessary, and if it is not learned at school, it will hardly be acquired at all.

24.—Break not the will of the young, but guide it to right ends.

25.—Courage is a wise counsellor.

26.—Be not the victim of to-morrow. To-day is the only day. Make no projects, but work.

While I delay
Life runs away.

27.—We neglect opportunities which are always present, and imagine that if those that are rare were offered, we should put them to good use. Thus we waste life waiting for what if it came we should be unprepared for.

28.—Wherever there is a human being there is opportunity for learning or teaching, for helping or being helped.

29.—The best are happy in their work, and have no time to remember that men are heedless or ungrateful.

30.—Nothing is so ingenious as vanity. It will find nourishment where common-sense would starve.

31.—Happiness is the radical craving of our nature. Let the educator recognize this. and make plain to his pupils that usefulness is the chief source of happiness, and that the power to be useful is the result of one's persistent efforts to educate himself, and thus to make himself a fountainhead of light and strength.

32.—The educator's fundamental precept is not—Be thyself—but—Become thyself.

33.—Mind educates mind, character builds character.

34.—Though all I have and strive for, be cast aside as having no worth, yet am I certain that failure, not less than success, serves God's purpose, if we but have good-will.

35.—If great thy purpose, though thou fail, thy life is not without avail.

36.—Let the teacher look for the cause of his failure in himself, and not in his pupils; for it is generally found in himself, and it is more fruitful to strive to correct one's self than to find fault with others.

37.—Study and treat each pupil with as much care as a skillful and conscientious physician diagnoses and follows a case of illness, when he feels the life of the patient is at stake.

38.—Within thee there lies captive one whom it is thy duty to set free from the darkness of ignorance and the bondage of passion, that he may become a citizen of the kingdom of heaven and have the liberty of the children of God. This is the work appointed for thee, which if thou fail rightly to perform, no power can redeem thee from misery.

39.—What share has the intellect in the formation of character? Does thought alone constrain man to strive for the highest life? Or is something more than thought required to impel him to the pursuit of perfection? This is a fundamental consideration for all who are occupied with education.

40.—The aim of education, as of religion, is to hold the animal man in subjection to the spiritual, and we have come to understand that to weaken the body is not the way to accomplish this end. A healthy mind can hardly be found except in a healthy body, and the greater our mental and moral power, the greater our need of physical vigor and endurance.

41.—They who throw the spirit of the greatest love into their work are the greatest saints and the greatest teachers.

42.—The child is bound by a double claim of ignorance and helplessness. He is a prisoner, and it is the educator's business to unbar the door and set him free; and he can do this only by teaching him to reflect, to obey, to act in accordance with what good sense and just laws command. His emancipation must be a gradual and slow process; for he can become free only through habits of self-control and industry. He is the slave of ignorance, and knowledge can be acquired only by long and patient labor; he is the bond-servant of his helpless condition, and this helplessness is good for him, because it forces him to learn obedience and self-denial, and thus acquire the moral strength which liberates. The sense of his obligations to others must be awakened in him, or he will not gain self-respect; the spirit of reverence must be cultivated; he must be taught to lift his soul to the Heavenly Father and to walk in His presence, or the sacredness and worth of life will not be revealed to him. He must be taught to admire those whose superiority is founded on wisdom and virtue, or the ideal of human perfection shall be hidden from him. In looking up to such men and women a sense of his own dignity is brought home to him, and in following their teaching and example he feels himself purified and exalted. Thus little by little the meaning of freedom dawns upon him, and he at the same time acquires the virtues which alone can prevent its becoming a curse.

43.—There is in our youth a failure of will, of the power to resolve highly and to pursue the object of desire through long years of unwearying labor.

44.—Example, whether presented in life or in literature, is the good teacher.

45.—The heart of youth throbs in the bosom of the future and its life-current bears the seed of richer harvests than have ever been garnered. O fathers and mothers, O teachers and ministers of God, be mindful that in your hands lie the issues of life and death, that to you are committed the highest and the holiest hopes of the race.

46.—We worry because we do so little, whereas the real trouble is that what we do is ill done. Of work, done as well as man can do it, a little is sufficient to make a life useful and noble.

47.—The thoughts and sentiments of others concerning thee have significance and value only in so far as they affect thy own thoughts and sentiments. Give heed to thyself and be neither cast down nor elated by what is said of thee.

48.—Those who have genuine worth are esteemed by others more than they esteem themselves. It is only pretenders who complain of lack of appreciation, while real men, thinking modestly of themselves, are content with the recognition they receive.

49.—Whether no one or a few or thousands praise or condemn thee, thou art what thou art: and if thou need the approval of men to make thee what thou art, it matters little what thou art.

50.—To do lowly work with a love as high as God, and thoughts as true, is to be heroic.

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